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ABSTRACT

This Introductory Packet provides readings and related activities on support for transitions to address barriers to student learning covering both research and best practices. It explores why transitions are dangerous opportunities that can disrupt or promote development. Key transitions and related intervention strategies are presented for starting school; daily transitions including before and after school as well as recess and lunch; year transitions such as beginning a new school year; moving to a new school/new country; transitions for special needs students; and transitions from high school. Planning and implementing programs that support transitions for students, family, and staff provide an opportunity for school support staff to take a leadership role. This encompasses program development and raising awareness about the benefits of coordinating programs for prevention and interventions designed to address transition problems. The importance of support staff, families and students planning for transitions is accompanied by suggestions and models. Resources include references, organizations, websites, and Center materials related to transitions. (Contains 14 references.) (GCP)

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Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support. An Introductory Packet.

Center for Mental Health in Schools
University of California at Los Angeles

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An *Introductory Packet* From the Center's Clearinghouse*

Transitions:
Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support

*The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA.
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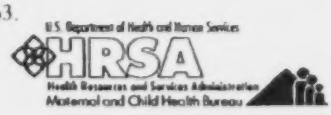
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Training and Technical Assistance

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Under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project in the Department of Psychology at UCLA, our center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter fragmentation and enhance collaboration between school and community programs.

MISSION: ***To improve outcomes for young people by enhancing policies, programs, and practices relevant to mental health in schools.***

Through collaboration, the center will

 # enhance practitioner roles, functions and competence

 # interface with systemic reform movements to strengthen mental health in schools

 # assist localities in building and maintaining their own infrastructure for training, support, and continuing education that fosters integration of mental health in schools

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About the Center's Clearinghouse

The scope of the Center's Clearinghouse reflects the School Mental Health Project's mission -- to enhance the ability of schools and their surrounding communities to address mental health and psychosocial barriers to student learning and promote healthy development. Those of you working so hard to address these concerns need ready access to resource materials. The Center's Clearinghouse is your link to specialized resources, materials, and information. The staff supplements, compiles, and disseminates resources on topics fundamental to our mission. As we identify what is available across the country, we are building systems to connect you with a wide variety of resources. Whether your focus is on an individual, a family, a classroom, a school, or a school system, we intend to be of service to you. Our evolving catalogue is available on request; and available for searching from our website.

What kinds of resources, materials, and information are available?

We can provide or direct you to a variety of resources, materials, and information that we have categorized under three areas of concern:

- **Specific psychosocial problems**
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Among the various ways we package resources are our *Introductory Packets, Resource Aid Packets, special reports, guidebooks*, and *continuing education units.* These encompass overview discussions of major topics, descriptions of model programs, references to publications, access information to other relevant centers, organizations, advocacy groups, and Internet links, and specific tools that can guide and assist with training activity and student/family interventions (such as outlines, checklists, instruments, and other resources that can be copied and used as information handouts and aids for practice).

Accessing the Clearinghouse

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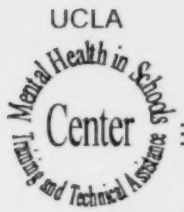

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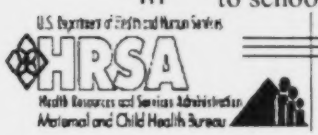
The UCLA Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. In particular, it focuses on comprehensive, multifaceted models and practices to deal with the many external and internal barriers that interfere with development, learning, and teaching. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter marginalization and fragmentation of essential interventions and enhance collaboration between school and community programs. In this respect, a major emphasis is on enhancing the interface between efforts to address barriers to learning and prevailing approaches to school and community reforms.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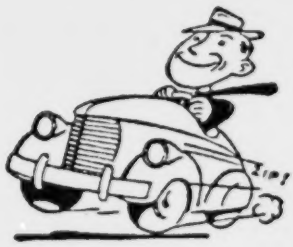

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Preface

Students and their families are involved in important transitions every day and throughout the years of schooling. Interventions to enable successful transitions make a significant difference in how motivationally ready and able youngsters are to benefit from schooling.

To meet the goals of No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, schools must understand the impact of transitions and establish a range of transition supports.

Transitional failure can be viewed as stemming from factors related to the environment, person, or both. For example, school systems and individual schools are quite variable in the degree to which they are prepared to address the transitional needs of highly mobile students, recent immigrants and other newcomers. Thus, some new students enter friendly and inviting settings; others encounter settings are nonaccommodating or even hostile. And, of course, newcomers vary in terms of their capability and motivation with respect to psychological transition into new settings (e.g., some did not want to move, some are shy, some are uninterested in learning new ways).

Planning and implementing programs that support transitions for student, family, and staff provide an opportunity for school support staff to take a leadership role. This encompasses program development and raising awareness about the benefits of coordinating programs for prevention and interventions designed to address transition problems.

This introductory packet is designed to provide frameworks and practice tools for addressing transitions. When seen as a part of a comprehensive component for learning support, the potential risks stemming from transitions become opportunities to enhance learning support. Samples of tools, model programs, and evidence based interventions are provided as a way to stimulate thinking on how to maximize the opportunities of key transitions. Indepth resources are suggested for working on specific transitions.

As always, we are eager to hear from practitioners and policy makers on successes and challenges in providing mental health in schools so we can share the lessons learned with others.

Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support

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I. Addressing Transitions Is Critical to the Success of Students & Schools

A. Change Can Disrupt or Promote Growth

B. Interventions to Support Transitions: State of the Art

C. General Facets and Intervention Tasks Related to Support for Transitions

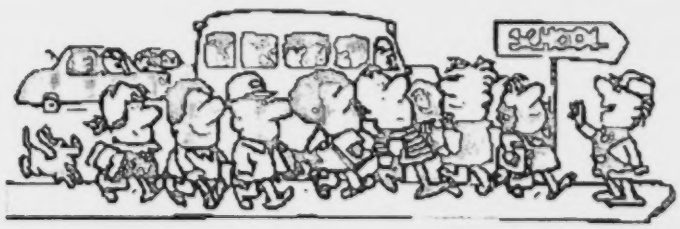
D. Mapping Transition Programs at a School

A five year old begins kindergarten.
A six year old arrives early to the playground to wait for school to start.
A seven year old spends recess and lunch on the bench to prevent fights
An eight year old has "nothing to do" after school
A ten year old moves from elementary to middle school
An eleven year old is referred for summer school
A twelve year old moves mid year and changes school
A thirteen year old arrives from another country and enrolls in school
A special education student returns to a regular education class
A seventeen year old weighs decisions about college or work
A new teacher is hired

What do all of these transitions related to school have in common?

What role can schools play in addressing these transitions?

These and related questions are the focus of this introductory packet.



I. Addressing Transitions Is Critical to the Success of Students & Schools

A. Change Can Disrupt or Promote Development and Learning

Research points to a variety of familial, cultural, job, social class, communication, and attitude as factors that hinder successful transitions. Barriers can be categorized as institutional, personal, or impersonal. Each type includes negative attitudes, lack of mechanisms and skills, or practical deterrents. For instance, *institutional* barriers encompass a lack of policy commitment to welcoming, inadequate resources (money, space, time), lack of interest or hostile attitudes on the part of staff, administration, and community and failure to establish and maintain necessary mechanisms and skill to ensure program success. *Impersonal* barriers include the neglect in addressing transitions, a rapid influx of new students that overwhelms the schools ability to respond, lack of resources in the school and home to smooth transitions. *Personal* barriers include attitudes on the part of individual staff that addressing transitions is not worth the effort and is not the responsibility of schools and acquired negative attitudes of specific students and parents that the new school will be no better than the last one.

Some Excerpts from the Research Literature

From: **Adolescence, School Transitions, and Prevention: A Research-Based Primer**
by B.A. Berliner (1993) (http://www.nwrac.org/pub/library/a/a_adolesc.pdf)

"...In most cases, changes in an individual's life are considered natural and good. But they can be difficult as well, upsetting that which we know and have become accustomed to...Difficulties in adjusting to school transitions heighten the potential for developing more serious problems.

...prevention literature focuses on protective factors as well as the current notion that life transitions may be overlooked opportunities to help adolescents thrive. It is a call to recognize school transitions as important life events and to promote the development of preventive interventions during these periods....

Transitions are defined as the movement from "one state of certainty to another with a period of uncertainty in between (Schilling, Snow, and Schinke, 1988, p. 2). What happens during and because of this period of uncertainty is important to applied researchers and preventionists...

For more than two decades, researchers have studied how the social environment contributes to the development of psychosocial, psychiatric, or physical disorders...Their work links life changes and the resulting demands for readjustment to stress...

Researchers and preventionists have...enriched their understanding of the development of problem behaviors by focusing on children's resilience, or the successful adaptation to stress and adversity. ...

Effective coping is a resilient response to stress, functioning both to solve problems and manage emotional trauma. A goal of prevention is to overcome stressful life events and turn them into learning experiences, rather than having them trigger a crisis..."

##

From: **The Educational Consequences of Mobility for California Students & Schools,**
by R.W. Rumberger, et al, *Policy Analysis for California Education, Policy Brief, 1, 1999*

"Mobility hurts students academically. There is overwhelming evidence that mobility during high school diminishes the prospects for graduation: students who changed high schools even once were less than half as likely as stable students to graduate from high school....

Mobility not only impacts students who change schools, it impacts classrooms and schools with mobility students. School personnel identified a number of ways that mobile students create chaos and burdens in the classroom as well as in the school. Teachers were adamant about how disruptive and difficult it is to teach in classroom with constant student turnover. And school administrators reported how time-consuming it is to simply process students when they enter and exit a school. Beyond the administrative costs, school personnel also identified fiscal impacts that result from mobile students...and impacts on school climate.

...Educators were quick to point out how mobility could affect both mobile and non-mobile students in their schools. They characterized the overall effects of student mobility at the school level as a "chaos" factor that impacts classroom learning activities, teacher morale, and administrative burdens – all of which can impact the learning and achievement of all students in the school...."

(cont.)

Some Excerpts from the Research Literature (cont.)

From "Temporal variations in school-associated student homicide and suicide events – United States, 1992-1999." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 2001, August 10;50(31):657-60*

Research on temporal variations in school violence reports that school homicide rated increased markedly in association with the transition between the fall and spring semesters. The findings indicate that homicide event rates were relatively high near the beginning of the school year.

. . .

"Several possible explanations exist for the relatively high rates of school-associated homicide events at the start of each semester. First, conflicts that started either before or during the semester/holiday break may have escalated into lethal violence when students returned to school for the start of a new semester. Second, the start of a new semester represents a time of considerable change and stress for violent behavior. For these reasons, schools should consider policies and programs to facilitate adjustment of students during this transitional period. Violence prevention strategies could include enhancing the social skills of students through classroom curricula, improving the social climate of the school by training teachers and administrators, and providing a safe environment through use of security measures...."

B. Intervening to Support Transitions: State of the Art

In order to succeed in their goal of No Child Left Behind, schools find they must face up to the importance of establishing transition programs. Interventions to enable successful transitions can strengthen problem solving skills and enhance resilience. These interventions make a significant difference in how motivationally ready and able students are to benefit from schooling.

Combining research from various sources highlights the potential impact of a systematic focus on supporting transitions in schools.

>Available evidence supports the positive impact of early childhood programs in preparing young children for school. The programs are associated with increases in academic performance and may even contribute to decreases in discipline problems in later school years.

> There is enough evidence that before- and after-school programs keep kids safe and steer them away from crime, and some evidence suggesting they can improve academic performance.

>Evaluations show that well-conceived and implemented programs can successfully ease students' transition between grades

>Preliminary evidence suggests the promise of programs that provide welcoming and social support for children and families transitioning into a new school.

> Programs that aid in the transition in and out of special education need better implementation and related evaluation.

> The available reports do suggest such interventions will enhance students' attitudes about school and self and will improve their academic performance.

> Finally, programs providing vocational training and career education are having an impact in terms of increasing school retention and graduation and show promise for successfully placing students in jobs following graduation.

As the above indicates, a beginning has been made, but there is much more that must be done. In this respect, it has been suggested that school improvement policies can only succeed if effective transition programs are developed and are fully integrated into a comprehensive learning support component at every school.

Note: These conclusions are based on a review of outcome based transition programs. This information is summarized in the Center's Technical Assistance Sampler "*A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning*," which can be accesses at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu.

C. General Facets & Intervention Tasks Related to Support for Transitions

While the nature and scope of transitions vary, there are common features in planning and implementing interventions to support transitions. And, as with every intervention, considerations about time, space, materials, and competence arise at every step of the way.

Think in Terms of Three Overlapping Facets:

In planning and implementing each of the following facets, a major concern is addressing barriers that make it hard for students in transition to function effectively.

(1) Broad-band practices (often designated universal approaches) to ensure support is in place for each identified transition where intervention is indicated.

(2) Enhanced personalization to accommodate minor differences (watching for those having minor adjustment problems and providing just a bit more personalized assistance, e.g., aid in overcoming minor barriers to successful adjustment, a few more options to enable effective functioning and make participation more attractive).

(3) Special assistance (identifying as early as feasible those who have not made an effective adjustment or who remain uninvolved due to major barriers, an intense lack of interest or negative attitudes, and/or lack of capability). This facet requires continued use of personalized approaches, as well as intensive outreach and special assistance.

Key Intervention Tasks

Each intervention facet encompasses four major intervention tasks:

1. Establishing a mechanism for prioritizing development, planning, implementation, and the ongoing evolution of the needed transition programs.

2. Developing specific strategies and activities related to each transition program (e.g., social supports, enhancing motivational readiness for involvement, capacity building)

3. Initiating each transition program

4. Ongoing maintenance and creative renewal of all programs designed to support transitions

Mapping Transition Programs at a School

As a school sets out to enhance the usefulness of education support programs designed to address barriers to learning, it helps to clarify what is in place as a basis for determining what needs to be done. Special attention must be paid to

- what is in place
- what needs improving
- what is missing

This provides a basis for resource analysis. Such analysis decides what is worth continuing as is, what is not worth continuing, how resources can be deployed to strengthen current activity, and what the priorities are for developing additional programs.

In the process, recommendations can be made about (a) what procedures are in place for enhancing resource usefulness and (b) how to improve coordination of resources and better integrate activity.

The following self-study survey provides a starting point for such efforts.

Each item is rated in terms of

whether the intervention currently exists
if so, whether it needs enhancement
if it doesn't exist, whether it is something that should be established

Based on the self-study, staff, families, and communities are in a better position to establish priorities and plan and implement essential supports for transition. In doing so, the emphasis is not to establish another piecemeal "add-on" or special project. The point is to take another step in developing a sustainable, comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach that addresses major barriers to students learning and teaching teaching effectively.

Support for Transitions: Survey of Program Status

The emphasis here is on planning, developing, and maintaining a comprehensive focus on the variety of transition concerns confronting students and their families. The work in this area can be greatly aided by advanced technology. Anticipated outcomes are reduced levels of alienation and increased levels of positive attitudes toward and involvement at school and in a range of learning activity.

For each item, indicate whether it currently exists; whether it needs enhancement; if it doesn't exist, is it something that should be established?

A. What programs for establishing a welcoming and supportive community are at the site?

1. Are there welcoming materials/a welcoming decor?
   Are there welcome signs?
   Are welcoming information materials used?
   Is a special welcoming booklet used?
   Are materials translated into appropriate languages?
   Is advanced technology used as an aid?

2. Are there orientation programs?
   Are there introductory tours?
   Are introductory presentations made?
   Are new arrivals introduced to special people such as the principal and teachers?
   Are special events used to welcome recent arrivals?
   Are different languages accommodated?

3. Is special assistance available to those who need help registering?

4. Are social support strategies and mechanisms used?
   Are peer buddies assigned?
   Are peer parents assigned?
   Are special invitations used to encourage family involvement?
   Are special invitations used to encourage students to join in activities?
   Are advocates available when new arrivals need them?

5.Other? (specify)

B. Which of the following transition programs are in use for grade-to-grade and program-to-program articulation?

1. Are orientations to the new situation provided?
2. Is transition counseling provided?
3. Are students taken on "warm-up" visits?
4. Is there a "survival" skill training program?
5. Is the new setting primed to accommodate the individual's need?
6. other (specify)

C. Which of the following are used to facilitate transition to post school living?
1. vocational counseling
2. college counseling
3. a mentoring program
4. job training
5. job opportunities on campus
6. a work-study program
7. life skills counseling
8. Other? (specify)

Support for Transitions: Survey of Program Status (cont.)

D. Which of the following before and after school programs are available?
1. subsidized breakfast/lunch program
2. recreation program
3. sports program
4. Youth Services Program
5. youth groups such as drill team interest groups service clubs organized youth programs ("Y,' scouts) Cadet Corps, other (specify)
6. academic support in the form of
   - tutors
   - homework club
   - study hall
   - homework phone line
   - homework center
   - other (specify)
7. enrichment opportunities (including classes)
8. Other (specify)

E. Which of the following programs are offered during vacation or intersession?
1. recreation
2. sports
3. Youth Services
4. youth groups
5. academic support
6. enrichment opportunities (including classes)
7. other (specify)

F. What programs are used to meet the educational needs of personnel related to this programmatic area?
1. Is there ongoing training for team members concerned with the area of Support for Transitions?
2. Is there ongoing training for staff of specific services/programs? (e.g., teachers, peer buddies, office staff, administrators)?
3. Other? (specify)

G. Which of the following topics are covered in educating stakeholders?
1. understanding how to create a psychological sense of community
2. developing systematic social supports for students, families, and staff
3. developing motivation knowledge, and skills for successful transitions
4. the value of and strategies for creating before and after school programs

H. Please indicate below any other ways that are used to provide support for transitions.

I. Please indicate below other things you want the school to do to provide support for transitions.

II. Key Transitions and Related Intervention Strategies

For our purposes here,
we will focus on the following key transitions:

A. Starting School: Transitions to Kindergarten

B. Daily Transitions
>Before School
>Recess and Lunch
>After School

C. Yearly Transitions
>A New School Year; a New Class; a New Building
>Vacations and Intersession

D. Mobility – Moving, Moving, Moving
>Impact of Student Mobility on Learning & Behavior
>Special Concerns of Students from Other Countries

E. From High School to Higher Education and Employment

F. Special Needs Students and Transitions

II. Key Transitions and Related Intervention Strategies

Students, families, and school staff experience a great many transition concerns. Starting school is certainly a major one. So are the moves from grade to grade and especially from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school. Although many students make these transitions with little apparent difficulty, it is evident that significant numbers do not. Any youngster may experience academic, social, and emotional challenges in negotiating transitions. And, failure to cope effectively with such challenges can have life-shaping consequences. For example, dropouts (pushouts?) occur with too great a frequency in the transitions between middle and high school and even between elementary and middle school. Support for transitions calls for well-designed transition interventions.

For a range of evidence based programs to support the transitions, again see the Center Technical Assistance Sampler entitled: *A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning*

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

A. Starting School: Transitions to Kindergarten

Starting kindergarten is a major event for most children and often for their parents as well. For many, the transition goes smoothly and the child rapidly gets immersed in the excitement of the daily interactions and learning opportunities and even finds the experience to be fun. This seems especially so for those who have been in day care programs and experienced them as positive. Some youngsters and their families, however, experience the transition as an extremely stressful and anxiety generating time. This can be especially the case for those who have not gone through the process of separating from parents.

> "Starting school is a major milestone for children and parents. School is a place away from home where a child will have some of his or her greatest challenges, successes, failures, and embarrassments. Because school is beyond the control of parents, it can be stressful for both the child and the parents...."
>
> From: American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
> Fact Sheet: *Starting School* (March 2002)
> http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/82.htm

Supporting Development and Learning During the Transition to Kindergarten: A Challenge and an Opportunity

The Harvard Family Research Project provides a nice overview of research and practice. Following are excerpts from a 2002 report entitled: *The Transition to Kindergarten: A Review of Current Research and Promising Practices to Involve Families* (by M. Bohan-Baker & P. Little – online at http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/research/bohan.html).

The report stresses that transition research indicates "schools need to take a more proactive approach to involving and engaging families prior to the start of school." Specifically, it is suggested that

. . . schools need to base transition practices on three interrelated principles:

1. **Reaching out**. Schools reach out and link with families and preschools in order to establish relationships and engage in two-way communication about how to establish effective transition practices.

2. **Reaching backward in time**. Schools establish links particularly with families before the first day of school.

3. **Reaching with appropriate intensity**. Schools develop a range of practices with varying intensity (i.e., low intensity-flyers or pamphlets, high intensity-personal contacts or home visits).

Further, transition activities implemented prior to kindergarten entry must be sustained once the child enters school in order to ensure continuity...

While specific approaches vary across communities, some promising practices to "reach out" and "reach back" to families beyond talking to parents once their child enters kindergarten are listed below...

- Periodic contact with families of preschoolers, either via a telephone call or face-to-face, to begin sharing information about the child and their routines, and their school setting

(cont.)

- Periodic contact with the children themselves to begin to develop a relationship prior to school entry

- Invitations to visit the kindergarten in the spring of the child's preschool year

- Preparation and dissemination of home-learning activities, including providing summer book lists and other literacy activities for the summer months prior to kindergarten entry

- Family meetings prior to the onset of kindergarten to discuss teacher expectations

- Partner with local parent-teacher association to inform parents how they can be involved in their child's kindergarten setting and connect new families with families currently enrolled in the school

- Dissemination of information to parents on the transition to kindergarten, including kindergarten registration guidelines, kindergarten options in the community, information on specific schools once placements have been made, and health and nutrition information to ensure that children enter school healthy

- Home visits before and after children enter kindergarten

- Support groups for parents as their children transition to kindergarten

- Facilitate early registration for kindergarten so that families have time to prepare children for their new setting and so specific teachers can "reach back" to their prospective students well before the first day of school

- In areas with a large percentage of limited English proficiency families, staff early care and education and kindergartens with bilingual teacher aides....

Some of the references from this article:

Child Trends. (2000). *School readiness: Helping communities get children ready for school and schools ready for children.* Washington, DC: Author.

Education Commission of the States. (2000). *Easing the transition to kindergarten.* Denver, CO: Author.

Kagan, S. L., & Neuman, M. J. (1998). Lessons from three decades of transition research. *The Elementary School Journal, 98*(4). 365-379.

Kraft-Sayre, M. E., & Pianta, R. C. (2000). *Enhancing the transition to kindergarten: Linking children, families, and schools.* Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, National Center for Early Development & Learning.

Meisels, S. J. (1999). *Assessing readiness. In The Transition to Kindergarten.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

O'Brien (1991). *Promoting successful transitions into school: A review of current intervention practices.* Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Early Childhood Research Institute.

Pianta, R. C., Cox, M. J., Taylor, L., & Early, D. (1999). Kindergarten teachers' practices related to the transition to school: Results of a national survey. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*(1). 71-86.

Pianta, R. C., Rimm-Kauffman, S. E., & Cox, M. J. (1999). *Introduction: An ecological approach to kindergarten transition. In The Transition to Kindergarten.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

Ramey, C. T., & Ramey, S. L. (1999). *Beginning school for children at risk. In The Transition to Kindergarten.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

How might a school plan and implement the transition to kindergarten?

The following examples of specific steps and activities are excerpted from a manual developed by the National Center for Early Development & Learning based on its Kindergarten Transition Studies (at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville).

The manual is entitled *Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools* (2000) and was written by M. Kraft-Sayre & R. Pianta, It can be downloaded at http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/PDFs/transman.pdf

By way of introduction, the authors stress:

> "...The approach described here systematically addresses the multiple social connections that affect children's transition to school. A variety of transition strategies are offered that can be tailored to the individual needs of families and schools. It is not a "one-size fits all" program applicable to all schools and all families. Every family's needs are different and each community has unique characteristics and constraints. On the other hand, having a framework for enhancing children's transition into kindergarten can give rise to a range of practices that educators can use in their local settings.
>
> This manual describes this framework and the key principles in formulating a community transition plan. A menu of transition practices is provided to serve as a springboard from which communities can develop their own specific transition strategies. We will also describe our experiences in collaborating with a local community in developing and implementing this approach to kindergarten transition."

On the following pages are their (1) guiding principles, (2) practice menu, (3) a brief indication of data gathering procedures, and (4) some relevant references.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

"This approach to fostering successful kindergarten transitions for children, families, and schools involves a range of practices based on five guiding principles. These principles form the core elements of transition practices that can be applied to individual children, families, and schools. They are based upon extensive analysis of best practices with young children and knowledge about supporting healthy child and family development. These principles guide the implementation of the transition practices described in this manual, can be used to generate additional practices, and can inform decisions about how to adjust or tailor practices to a given situation.

1. Foster Relationships as Resources

Supportive, effective relationships are resources for children. When a child is involved in and surrounded by supportive relationships, the transition to kindergarten occurs more smoothly.

2. Promote Continuity from Preschool to Kindergarten

Fundamental to a smooth transition are relationships that serve as a bridge between the family and school and provide continuity from preschool to kindergarten. These relationships can be found among parents, teachers, family workers, other school staff, and the child's peers.

3. Focus on Family Strengths

Relationships between schools and families, reflecting the strengths of families, can be developed through supportive, positive interactions initiated by the school.

4. Tailor Practices to Individual Needs

The actual set of transition practices enacted with a given family or classroom must be based on the needs and strengths of that child, family, teacher, school and community. Thus, this approach is menu-driven and designed to be flexibly applied across a wide range of needs and strengths.

5. Form Collaborative Relationships

Collaboration among the key players in the transition process—teachers, principals, family workers, families—is fundamental in developing and implementing successful transition practices..."

Excerpt from: **Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools** (2000). M. Kraft-Sayre & R. Pianta, National Center for Early Development & Learning, Kindergarten Transition Studies, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/PDFs/transman.pdf)

Kindergarten Transition Practices Menu -- Summary

1. FAMILY-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

- Contact with family during first few days of preschool or kindergarten
- Assessment of family needs
- Periodic contact with family
- Connecting family to community resources
- Family participation in home-learning activities
- Family participation in the classroom and at school events
- Regular family meetings at school
- Family meetings about transition issues
- Family & preschool teacher information-sharing with kindergarten teacher about individual child
- Newsletters/resource materials
- Parent orientation after preschool and kindergarten start

2. CHILD-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

- Preschool child connection with kindergarten teacher
- Preschool connection with elementary school for special school functions
- Preschool practice of kindergarten rituals
- Kindergarten activities incorporated from preschool
- Preschool teacher contact with former students
- Kindergarten support staff visit preschool children

3. PEER CONNECTIONS

- Peer connections within the class
- Peer connections outside of school
- Peer connections with non-classmate peers who will be in kindergarten
- Preschool peer connections with kindergarten peers
- Group-based peer connections

4. COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Inter-school collaboration about programs and classroom practices
- Identifying and communicating curriculum/community expectations for children
- Inter-school connection about specific child
- Connections with community agencies

Excerpt from: **Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools** (2000). M. Kraft-Sayre & R. Pianta, National Center for Early Development & Learning, Kindergarten Transition Studies, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/PDFs/transman.pdf)

DATA GATHERING FOR EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

• *The Kindergarten Transition Project Parent Interviews* were conducted by family workers and serve dual purpose of engaging families in relationships with schools and gathering information about family experiences in schools and at home. Interviews focus on parents' descriptions of literacy activities, child behavior, rules and routines in preparing for school, social supports networks, family relationships with schools, peer contact outside of school, and parent coping.

• *The Family-School Contact Log* was completed by teachers and family workers to record their contacts with families using a daily-diary method.

• *The Transition Practices Menu Checklist* documented the use of transition practices throughout the course of preschool and summer.

• *The Elementary School Personnel Contact Log* was completed by the family workers during the kindergarten year to track the contact maintained with elementary school personnel.

• *The Transition to Kindergarten Activities Questionnaires* identified participants' experiences with various transition activities.

• *The Student-Teacher Relationship Scale* assessed teachers' perceptions of their relationships with a particular student.

• *The Kindergarten Transition Project Debriefing Interview* was designed to elicit participant's impressions of the transition process and their experiences collaborating with the NCEDL..."

Some of the relevant references cited in this manual:

Pianta, R. C., & Cox, M. J. (1999). *The transition to kindergarten.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Pianta, R.C., & Kraft-Sayre, M.E. (May 1999). Parents' observations about their children's transitions to kindergarten. *Young Children, 54*(3), 47-52.

Ramey, S.L., Lanzi, R.G., Phillips, M.M., & Ramey, C.T. (1998) Perspectives of former Head Start children and their parents on the transition to school. *Elementary School Journal, 98*(4). 311-328

Ramey, S.L., & Ramey, C.T. (1998). Commentary: The transition to school opportunities and challenges for children, families, educators, and communities. *Elementary School Journal, 98*(4). 293-295.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Head Start Bureau. (1996). *Effective transition practices: Facilitating continuity: Training guide for the Head Start learning community.* Aspen Systems Corporations.

Excerpt from: **Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools** (2000). M. Kraft-Sayre & R. Pianta, National Center for Early Development & Learning, Kindergarten Transition Studies, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/PDFs/transman.pdf)

Spotting Problems in the Transition to Kindergarten and Responding Quickly with the Least Intervention Needed

School adjustment problems usually become a matter of concern when a teacher or parent is bothered by the way a student is functioning.

The concern may arise because the student is perceived as not learning appropriately and/or as behaving inappropriately.

Successful adjustment at school depends not only on having the necessary skills and behaviors to learn, but also on the demand characteristics of the classroom situation to which the student is assigned. When a program does little to accommodate diversity (e.g., individual differences and deficiencies), the root of a school adjustment problem can be viewed as the environment. That is, initially at least, the student's behavior and learning problems may be an unintentional by-product of ineffectual attempts to cope in an unaccommodating situation.

With specific reference to early school adjustment problems, there is value in approaching learning and behavior problems sequentially (i.e., first making system changes in the school and classroom to better accommodate student differences in both motivation and development and then pursuing special assistance (e.g., remediation) if necessary. (See the Center resources listed below for more on this.)

There are a number of Center resources that can be helpful in specifically planning programs for the transition to kindergarten. Begin by going to our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu, locate the Quick Find search and click on the menu topic:

Early Childhood Development

This Quick Find provides ready access to the following Center documents:

>*Early Development and Learning from the perspective of Addressing Barriers* (an Introductory Packet)

>*Early Development and School Readiness from the Perspective of Addressing Barriers to Learning* (a Center Brief)

It also provides direct links to a host of other relevant centers and documents.

B. Daily Transitions

Throughout a school day there are many transition times when students need support (e.g., before school, during recess and lunch, after school).

Some of these, such as after school, have received increasing attention.

Other daily transition times and places go relatively unattended to despite the need and opportunities they provide for promoting healthy development and addressing barriers to development and learning.

1. Before School

Before school experiences differ for students.

For some, it is a long school bus ride to school.

Others leave homes which have been unable to provide an adequate breakfast.

In some neighborhoods, students who walk to school report being bullied on the way. Some are challenged by gang members and exposed to extreme violence.

Arriving on the school grounds, many are confronted with further peer harassment.

Many arrive late.

Students who don't feel safe, haven't eaten, and/or come late are less likely to start the school day motivationally ready and able to benefit from classroom instruction. Indeed, they often appear uninterested and distracted. Moreover, such students are likely candidates for a cycle of events that leads to behavior, learning, and emotional problems and departure from school before high school graduation.. A survey of school policies, for example, indicates that most schools respond to tardies in punitive ways, with consequences becoming more and more severe as students move through secondary school. And, the research literature indicates that frequent tardies and absences are early indicators of "dropouts."

Other research reports that hungry students are twice as likely as not hungry children to be classified as having impaired functioning by parent and child report. Teachers reported higher levels of hyperactivity, absenteeism, and tardiness among hungry/at-risk children than not hungry children. ("Relationship between hunger and psychosocial functioning in low income American children" J. Murphy, et al, (1998). *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 37*, 163-170)

> "...Principals are faced with a conundrum. They are continually under pressure to improve academic achievement and to be held accountable for their students' test scores. At the same time – while they understand the value and importance of nutrition, health, and physical activity as central to a student's growth and development – they are not encouraged nor are they rewarded for providing leadership in these areas. In effect, boards of education, legislators, and policy makers need to rework their policy priority and legislative mandates to ensure that principals receive a clear message that education is a holistic process and that nutrition and physical education must be central components of a school's program, and that they appreciate the inextricable link of a healthy student to student achievement..."
>
> National Association of Elementary School Principals http://www.naesp.org/

One Principal noted: "*It seems that no matter how early I get here, there are students waiting for the school to open.*"

Some students arrive early to see friends; others are there because parents have early work schedules. Some students have eaten breakfast, some haven't. Some arrived on early buses. Some hope to finish homework assignments. Others look forward to before school clubs and sports.

Before school programs have a large and diverse set of advocates, programs, and funding sources. Stakeholders focusing on before school as a time for well-designed interventions include those concerned with child care, adolescent supervision, nutrition, fitness, and those interested in creating a welcoming and supportive school climate. Those concerned with students problems during this daily transition time include stakeholders (e.g., student support staff) who must deal with before school misbehavior, reducing tardies, and enhancing students' readiness to learn at school each day.

All these stakeholders need to work together to develop a multifaceted and cohesive set of before school activities.

Examples of Before School Programs that Schools Can Use to Address Transition Concerns

School Breakfast Programs

> More than 72,000 schools nationwide offer breakfast at school...over 7 million kids eat breakfast at school...over 85% of students who participate in the breakfast program receive their meals free or at a reduced price...
>
> U. S. Department of Agriculture
> http://www.fns.usda.gov

Welcoming students to school with a breakfast program has had a number of benefits for students and for schools. Researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital found that offering a free school breakfast universally is associated with reduced tardies and improved school attendance, emotional functioning, and grades. Nearly 60 percent of the school staff reported a positive change in student behavior and attentiveness. 100% of parents said the program had a positive impact on their family life.[1]

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[1] "Impact of universally free, in-classroom school breakfast program on achievement, J. Murphy, et all, Abell Foundation, 2001

"The relationship of school breakfast to psychosocial and academic functioning" J. Murphy, et al, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 1998, 152: 899-906.

"Effects of breakfast timing on the cognitive functions of elementary school students, N. Vaisman, et al, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 1996, 150: 1089-1092.

"School breakfast program and school performance." A. Meyers, et al, American Journal of Diseases of Children, 1989, 143, 1234-1239.

"Nutrition and Education: A randomized trial of the effects of breakfast in rural primary school children" C. Powell, et al, American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 1998, 68(4), 873-879.

Other Before School Social Support Programs

For many students, a school breakfast program is a time to be with friends. For all students schools need to provide opportunities for students to interact with each other in positive ways to build their social and emotional skills and to promote a sense of community in the school. Well-designed semi-structured before school activities enable students to connect with peers and staff in ways that promote social-emotional development and help address barriers to such development.

Even the school bus experience can be turned into an opportunity for positive social interaction and learning. The National Education Association has an analysis of the risks and opportunities that face students and bus drivers each day. They note: "Drivers do not have a classroom, but they do have a unique environment in which communication with the children they transport is both an educational issue and a health and safety issue." Providing training for drivers, training students as mediators, providing learning enrichment activities on the bus are all ways to strengthen this often overlooked extended school setting.

Before School and Readiness to Learn Each Day

Minimally, playground aids and paraprofessionals should be provided with the training and resources to ensure that the first hour of school results in students who are ready to learn.

Some teachers enhance readiness by opening their classrooms early and inviting students to help set up and prepare for the school day.

More comprehensively, open libraries, homework rooms, access to supplies, computers, videos, enrichment activities, and other learning and practice opportunities can all send the message that the beginning of the school day is a good time to be at school and enables students readiness for formal classroom instruction.

An Example of Relevant Policy for Before School Programs

In 2001, the California legislature amended the After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program to become know as the *Before and After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program.*

The before school program must operate for a minimum of one and one half hours per day. The program leaders work with the school principal and staff to integrate with the school's curriculum, instruction, and learning support activities. The program must consist to two components:

1. An educational and literacy component to provide tutoring or homework assistance.
2. An educational enrichment component, which may include but is not limited to recreation and prevention activities. Such activities might involve the arts, music, physical activity, health promotion, and general recreation; work preparation activities; community service learning; and other youth development activities based on student needs and interests.

http://www.cde.ca.gov/afterschool/aspfactsheetapr02.cov

Something Special for "At Risk" Students

Check & Connect is an example of a program that can be used before school to provide support for at risk students. It was developed for urban middle school students with learning and behavioral challenges and was designed to promote students' engagement in school and to reduce and prevent dropping out. (See http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/model/default.html)

The aim is to fuel the motivation and foster the development of life skills needed to overcome obstacles. The primary goal is to promote regular school participation and to keep education a salient issue for students, parents and teachers. A staff member is designated as responsible for facilitating a student's connection with school and learning. The role can be characterized as a cross between a mentor, advocate, and coordinator of services. The monitor extends the school's outreach services to the youth and family in an effort to better understand the circumstances affecting their connection to school and to persistently work with the youth and family to overcome barriers that have kept them estranged from school.

Key Facets of the program include:

- Relationship Building
- Routine monitoring
- Individualized and timely interventions
- Long term commitment
- Persistent Plus
- Problem Solving
- Affiliation with school and learning.

The focus is on prevention, with intensive interventions for students who manifest significant problems. Examples of elementary intensive interventions include calling the student and parents in the morning to be sure they are getting ready for school, helping students apply organizational skills, ensuring students access academic tutors. Examples of secondary intensive interventions include encouraging students and parent participation in transition planning, enhancing social/behavioral competence, negotiating with school staff alternatives to suspension and transfers.

2. Recess and Lunch

Students and staff need a break, nutrition, exercise – Sounds simple and straightforward, but . . .

Unstructured times at school are "dangerous" for vulnerable students. Recess and lunch often result in referrals to the office for behavior problems, visits to the nurses office for scrapes, calls home to parents expressing concern over inappropriate social and interpersonal behaviors.

Recess

With respect to recess, such problems have led some to ask: "*Do we really need recess? Maybe we should just use the time for more instruction.*" Let's see what the research says.

Excerpts from: *Recess in Elementary School: What Does the Research Say?* By O. Jarrett (2002). ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (http://ericcece.org/pubs/digest;/2002/jarrett02.html)

Recess and Learning

The most obvious characteristic of recess is that it constitutes a break from the day's routine ... recall is improved when learning is spaced rather that presented all at once ... elementary school children became progressively inattentive when recess was delayed, resulting in more active play when recess occurred ... fourth-graders were more on-task and less fidgety in the classroom on days when they had had recess....

Recess and Social Development

Recess may be the only opportunity for some children to engage in social interactions with other children.... Much of what children do during recess...involves the development of social skills.... Recess provides a more "open setting" where children are free to leave the play situation. In open settings, children must learn to resolve conflicts to keep the game going, resulting in low levels of aggression on the playground.

Because recess is one of the few times in the school day when children can interact freely with peers, it is a valuable time in which adults can observe children's social behaviors, their tendency to bully and fight, as well as their leadership and prosocial behaviors.... Seeing how their students interact socially can help teachers and other playground supervisors intervene in situations involving aggression or social isolation....

Recess and Child Health

Physical inactivity poses health threats for children as well as for adults. Inactivity ... is associated with the tripling of childhood obesity since 1970.... Although not all children are active during recess, children's tendency to choose physical activity on the playground when they need it the most is expressed in higher levels of activity on the playground after recess was delayed....

Lunch

Lunch periods are controversial and often unruly times at schools. What should kids be eating? What are appropriate activities? Who supervises?

The tendency has been for the adults to argue among themselves about such matters. Some, however, have suggested that student voices need to be heard and that students need to be part of the resolution of the controversies and problems. Student planning groups, student leaders, student monitors – all can provide for greater involvement of youngsters in both making decisions and implementing solutions. This can reduce student reactivity to decisions and enhance motivation and a positive school climate and sense of community.

The need is to work with students and other stakeholders to design a lunch hour that is a good transition between morning and afternoon instruction. And, of course, both the process of planning and effective implementation of a positive approach can be important learning experiences in and of themselves. Student support staff can play an important role in facilitating the process and ensuring that implementation of programs is done in a integrated and effective manner.

Whatever the process, here are some major matters that need to be addressed:

What's to Eat? A major controversy related to school lunches is what food should be available. Nutritionist link the rise in childhood obesity to the fat content of meals served to students; school boards, parents, and students argue about fast food on campus; soft drink companies pay schools to have their product accessible to students.

Why is lunch so early? Why does it take so long to get food? In some large schools, staggered lunch hours begin at 10:30 in the morning. In mny schools, students complain about the time it takes to get their food.

Lunchtime Activities – what's available? Who Supervises? In some schools, the range of recreational equipment and options available during recess and lunch is too limited. Older students particularly want a range of options including sports and recreation, social activities (e.g., clubs and lunch time dances), and open facilities (e.g., the library, computer and music rooms). All this requires expanded supervision beyond teachers, administrators, playground aids and paraprofessionals; it means outreaching to bring in community resources (including volunteers) and teaching and using students who show leadership (e.g., teaching skills in conflict resolution and mediation and using them as recreation leaders, conflict mediators, and playground peace keepers).

Excerpt from: *Playground Leaders* by K. Calo & P. Ingram. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (http://ericeece.rog/pubs/digests/ed-cite/ed376984.html)

The Playground Leader program ... provides an opportunity for trained students to direct structured small and large group activity stations during recess.... The program encourages multi-age interaction in a positive and safe manner. The specific goals of the program are: (1) to provide a wide variety of activities for students to engage in... (2) to lessen recess-related injuries by providing safety-conscious activities; and (3) to provide an opportunity for a group of trained students to practice leadership and problem-solving skills.

What are the alternatives to punishment during lunch and recess? Students who misbehave often are asked to pick up papers, go to and stay in the office or the in-school detention room, and so forth. In contrast to such punitive actions, some schools are exploring ways to work with such students to enhance their engagement in learning and their motivation to do their best at school. Examples of interventions intended to enhance (rather than reduce) motivation for behaving and learning include mentoring, service learning activities, assisting in the cafeteria and on the playground, etc..

How can predictable problems be anticipated and prevented and school safety enhanced? First and foremost, it is essential to do something about those school "hangouts" that are hard to supervise places on the school campus. Bathrooms, locker rooms, the far side of the school yard, behind the last building, at the fence, etc., etc., etc. Everyone knows where the supervision is the lightest and where students looking for trouble will gravitate.

Another major concern is what to do with social groups (including gangs) that form during the lunch and recess and provoke or intimidate others.

A third concern is how to provide special assistance to individual students who need more support and guidance during recess and lunch.

The following is an excerpt from a resource that addresses the first two matters:

Excerpt from: *Safer Schools through Environmental Design* by T. Schneider (2001). ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

http://www.ericfacility.net.ericdigests.ed449549.html

...school officials can pinpoint specific environmental changes that will foster desired behavior rather than inadvertently encouraging unwanted behavior.... Posted rules and theme-oriented artwork to reinforce prosocial curriculum greater use of windows to enhance visibility and reduce isolation, student art displays to build a sense of pride, altered seating arrangements to encourage supportive group interactions, or changes in scheduling the use of space to avoid conflict are all potential.

...staff can conduct their own analysis by studying misbehavior on campus and analyzing why it occurs ... to help identify patterns related to problem behavior, such as types of problems that are prevalent and time and location of occurrence. Students, staff, parents, and neighbors can be surveyed to obtain their perceptions of problem areas. If bullying were an identified problem, for example, responses might include (1) instituting a bullying prevention curriculum to change the social ecology within the schools, and (2) altering the environment to expose or eliminate isolated locations where incidents occur....

Analysis of the school setting itself should include an examination of the school property, from the borders inward. Hazards should be identified, including locations where students can be isolated and victimized. Inadequate or poorly thought out playground equipment may not be able to meet the level of demand during recess. This may contribute to conflict, or it could promote cooperation.....

Students, staff, and custodians are the local experts on vandalism and other problems with the school. They can help pinpoint locations requiring particular attention when remedies are being formulated.

So serious is the problem of clean and safe facilities at school, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has taken school districts to court to correct the problem. The ACLU has charged that substandard campuses are made worse by overcrowding and year round schedules and "present students with formidable obstacles to learning."

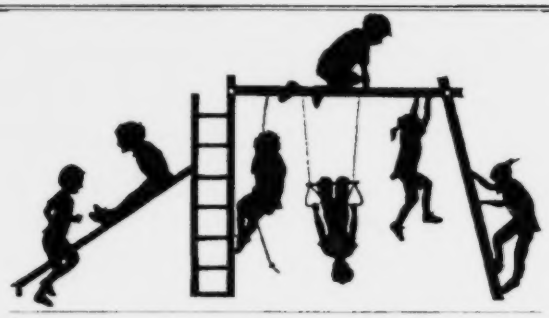
When Specific Students Need More Support and Guidance During Recess and Lunch

Repeated referrals to the office for problem behaviors during recess and lunch are clear indicators that specific students need something more. Many secondary students may use these transition periods as a time to leave campus and a look at class attendance by period will help to identify these students.

Some students are so uncomfortable during these transitions times when they have little support and guidance that they find "hiding" places.

Often, the best way to spot the problems and envision solutions is to spend time observing on the field, playground, cafeteria, etc. If the campus has an open lunch policy, this may also mean observing outside the school perimeter in the local community.

And, of course, a good step is to talk with the specific students about why there is a problem and what they think can and should be done to solve it. Often counter intutitive solutions will arise. One is to find ways such students can assume the type of positive "leadership" roles they usually are excluded from because of their problem behavior.



A Few Other Resources and References Related to Planning and Implementing Interventions for the Above Transitions

Etnier, J. L., Salazar, W., Landers, D. M., Petruzzello, S. J., Han, M., & Nowell, P. (1997). The influence of physical fitness and exercise upon cognitive functioning: A meta-analysis. Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 19(3), 249-277.

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II. Key transitions and related intervention strategies

3. After School

Interest in after school time has made this one of the most documented transitions. Here is an overview of some facts and figures excerpted from *Making the Case: A Fact Sheet on Children and Youth in Out of School Time* (published in 2003 by the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College – www.niost.org).[2]

- The best data available indicates that there are approximately 8 million children ages 5 to 14 that spend time without adult supervision on a regular basis.

- During the school year, more than 1 in 10 children regularly spend time alone or with a sibling under 13; but these children spend twice as much time unsupervised in the summer – 10 hours a week more on average – compared to the school year (Capizzano, Adelman & Stagner, 2002).

- Nationally, more than half of teens wish there were more community or neighborhood-based programs available after school, and two thirds of those surveyed said they would participate in such programs if they were available (Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, 2001).

- Young people with nothing to do during out-of-school hours miss valuable chances for growth and development. The odds are high that youth with nothing positive to do and nowhere to go will find things to do and places to go that negatively influence their development and futures (McLaughlin, 2000).

Children and youth benefit from participation in after school programming

- Students who spend no time in extracurricular activities are 49% more likely to use drugs and 37% more likely to become teen parents than those who spend one to four hours per week in extracurricular activities (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2002).

- Students participating in California's After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnerships Program (ASLSNPP) improved their standardized test scores (SAT-9) in reading (5.8%) more than scores of students statewide (3%). Participants who attended more than 150 days showed the largest increases in SAT-9. ASLSNPP participants also had better school attendance (University of California at Irvine, 2001).

- Of the 1,412 students attending the National Save the Children Partners and Collaboratives tutoring/homework assistance programs who were evaluated, 84% maintained high standards or showed improvement in either grades, homework completion, study habits, or other measures of academic success (Aguirre International, 2000)....

- A national evaluation of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America mentoring program provides evidence that participation in Big Brothers Big Sisters programs can positively affect at-risk youth. Participants were 45% less likely than their counterparts to initiate drug use during the study period and 27.4% less likely to initiate alcohol use (Grossman, Resch, & Tierney, 2000).

- Researchers studying participants in Cornell University's Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program found that the length of time youth participate in 4-H was found to have a significant impact on asset development. Longer participation led to higher scores on the developmental asset areas (Rodriguez, Hirschl, Mead, & Goggin, 1999).

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[2]Go to their website to see find full citations for the various references indicated.

- In the year two evaluation of The After School Corporation, 84% of principals responding to a survey reported that the TASC afterschool program had improved the overall effectiveness of the school, student motivation (81%), student attitude toward school (81%), and student attendance (77%) (Policy Studies Associates, 2001).

- High School students who participated in the Quantum Opportunities Program (which is targeted towards low-income teenagers in several large American cities) were more likely to be high school graduates (63%) compared to non-participants (42%) and more likely to go on to post-secondary schools (42%) compared to non-participants (16%) (Lattimore, Mihalic, Grotpeter, & Taggart, 1998).

- After-school programs provide a strong base for nurturing children's literacy development and providing a variety of types of literacy experiences (Spielberger & Halpern, 2002).

- There is significant research which shows that participation in after-school programs is positively associated with better school attendance, more positive attitude towards school work, higher aspirations for college, finer work habits, better interpersonal skills, reduced drop out rates, higher quality homework completion, less time spent in unhealthy behaviors, and improved grades (Clark, 1988; Hamilton & Klein, 1998; Huang, Gribbons, Kim, Lee, & Baker, 2000; McLaughlin, 2000; Posner & Vandell, 1994, 1999; Schinke, 1999; U.S. Dept. of Education, 1998).

- Adolescents who spend time in communities that are rich in developmental opportunities for them experience less risk and show evidence of higher rates of positive development. A diversity of program opportunities in each community is more likely to support broad adolescent development and attract the interest of and meet the needs of a greater number of youth (National Research Council, 2002).

Cost of services

- Findings from the MOST Initiative evaluation estimated that a full year program costs approximately $4,000 per child. Costs drop to $3,000 when space and utilities are donated. A recent study by the Rose Institute pertaining to California's proposition 49 concludes that afterschool programs in California are cost-effective. The study indicates that the return to taxpayers ranges from $2.99 to $4.03 for every dollar spent on afterschool programs and the benefit to students attending afterschool programs ranges from $2.29 to $3.04 for every dollar spent on afterschool programs.

- Expenditures produce benefits in the areas of reduced child care costs, improved school performance, increased compensation, reduced crime costs, and reduced welfare costs (Brown et al., 2002).

For examples of effective afterschool programs and how to establish them, see the Center document

After-School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning (a technical aid packet)

Online at – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Despite the problems that can be addressed and positive evaluations for a range of outcomes, the federal budget for after school programs was cut almost in half in 2003. Moreover, the emphasis for the remaining budget was on ways to enhance achievement test scores (e.g., more tutoring, less enrichment and recreation).

Ironically, the focus on federal funding and after *school* program development tends to obscure the reality that in many poor communities there are only a few formal programs for out of school time (including those that are school-based) and only a small portion of youngsters are enrolled in such programs. This raises a much broader set of equity issues related to society's support for development and learning.

For schools where many students are deprived of invaluable opportunities to use daily out of school time productively, the need is to play a greater role in enhancing transition after school programs (including afternoons, evenings, and week ends). To this end, student support staff need to help schools meet the challenge through program development that outreaches to community resources and braids school and community resources together.

When after-school programs are well-designed and integrated into a comprehensive continuum of interventions, such programs have the potential to ***strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhoods.***

As an after-school program develops, it provides safe and enriched child care, access to adult education training and vocational programs, and much more. When after-school programs are fully integrated with the school-day program (at school site and district-wide), the potential for increasing ***equity of opportunity for all students*** is enhanced and this ***benefits the school*** in many ways.

As the program evolves, it can be a force in ***strengthening families and communities*** by training and recruiting adults in the local community for positions in the after-school program, at the school during the day, and in the larger workplace. Beyond these first rungs on a career ladder, the program can establish training links with higher education to support aides and junior staff in moving toward more advanced positions (e.g., certificate and diploma programs -- including teaching).

Of course, all this underscores why it is so essential for schools and communities to move from pilots and projects to a focus on policy and systemic change in order to scale-up.

Moving from Projects to Community-Wide Programs

After-school times are among the best (and least disruptive periods) for connecting and enhancing school-community resources and services. And, school and community partnerships (with families playing a major role) could be a powerful tool for systemic change.

BUT . . .

> *. . . a chronic shortage of quality after-school programs exists.*
> *According to parents, the need far exceeds the current supply*
>
> Working for Children and Families:
> Safe and Smart After-School Programs" (2000)
> U.S. Depts. Of Education/Justice – http://pfie.ed.gov

The need for more programs is widely acknowledged. After-school programs can and need to be much more than another add-on effort in which community and school staff and programs compete with each other for sparse resources that are tied to a few time-limited projects. Projects and demonstrations are only the *first step* toward ensuring equity of access and opportunity.

AND . . .

This means enhancing efforts to maintain and evolve what has been established and use these projects and demonstrations as a foundation upon which to develop programs community-wide over time in keeping with a strategic plan for scale-up.

Toward a Scale-up Agenda: Pulling Partnerships Together for Policy and Resource Support

> *Federal, state, and local governments should take action to ensure accessible, affordable, high quality programs for school-age youth. . . .*
>
> National Assembly (2000). *After School and Summer Programs*
> http://www.nassembly.org/html/aftersum.html.

As has been widely stressed, there is a need for "glue money" to facilitate effective collaboration braiding school and community resources so that existing and new programs are linked into a community-wide system. This is seen as essential to achieving greater cost-effectiveness and accessibility.

There is a growing policy commitment and resources for after-school initiatives. At the federal level, the *21st Century Community Learning Centers* initiative has provided policy direction and glue money (http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/). At the state level, the National Governors' Association has established the *Extra Learning Opportunities Regional Forum* consisting of Governors' advisors, state legislators, representatives from departments of child care, juvenile justice, and education (http://www.nga.org/center). Its stated purpose is to help states identify goals and plans for advancing the state role in supporting a full-range of extra learning opportunities.

> *Clearly, the need for after-school programs continues to be widespread, the potential benefits of well-designed and implemented programs are considerable, and the policy climate for moving forward is present. The challenge is to avoid setting in motion another set of fragmented programs, and instead to use the opportunity to help fill gaps in school-community efforts to create comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to promoting healthy development and addressing barriers.*

SOME EXAMPLES OF WORK RELATED TO AFTERSCHOOL

Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development:
Lessons and Voices from the Field

Excerpted from: N. Yohalem & K. Pittman (2003) .
http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/papers/publiclibraries.pdf

". . . a focus on pathways, especially pathways for learning, puts libraries on equal footing with schools, recreation centers and other municipal services for youth...the initiatives demonstrated what libraries can do when given dedicated resources to develop new partnerships, expand youth employment efforts, provide staff development opportunities, and build and refine a range of youth-focused programs, including mentoring, homework assistance, technology training and career development...Equally important, many of these efforts demonstrated the value of engaging youth as staff and volunteers in helping libraries reach out to more children, youth and adults..."

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Mapping Resources for out of School Time

"All across Michigan museums, theaters, zoos, arts agencies, nature centers and libraries are helping children expand their horizons, develop their talents and learn in new, exciting ways. Some of the programs are partnerships with other after school education providers. Others invite individuals to participate.... The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries created this data base to help connect those seeking creative out of school hours educational experiences with cultural organizations that provide them." (For more on this, see http://www.micase.org)

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(cont.)

Service Learning – Another out of School Option
Excerpted from: "The Effects of Service Learning"
by S. H. Billig in the August, 2000 issue of *School Administrator*

"... service learning is a teaching strategy that links community services to classroom instruction...

high-quality service learning includes:

* thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet authentic community needs;
* structured time that allows students to talk, think and/or write or otherwise reflect about the service experience; and
* activities that enable students to engage in planning service in collaboration with community members, specifically giving students an opportunity to make decisions and solve problems...

As a whole, however, the body of evidence is compelling. Service learning has an impact on its participants in terms of personal and social development, academic achievement, development of civic responsibility and career exploration.

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Job Shadowing
Excerpted from: Teachers College, Columbia University,
Institute on Education and the Economy, 2001

"... there is a new consensus of research that indicates School-to-Work activities, such as job shadowing, which involve business/education partnerships do make a difference for students. This according to a report just published by the Institute on Education and the Economy (IEE) at Teachers College, Columbia University. The report, entitled School-to-Work: Making a Difference in Education, analyzed the wealth of studies that focus on the evaluation of School-to-Work

The report found that many studies show participation in STW supports academic achievement in a variety of ways, including reducing the dropout rate and increasing college enrollment... The report found that STW contributes significantly to students' career preparation, through exploration activities and work-based learning experiences that teach students skills that are useful in careers. These activities help students think about and plan for the future, including college. The findings also indicate that participation in STW helps students mature and develop psychologically as they gain increased knowledge of the importance of school.

C. Yearly transitions

I don't want to go back to school.
The teachers are mean and the kids don't like me.

I'm sorry but you have to go back;
you're the Principal!

1. A New School Year; a New Class; a New Building

The above is an old joke. But it captures a sad truth for many students and staff beginning a new school year – a sense of dread in facing problems left behind when summer or intersession breaks comes along.

Transitions to something new can be both exciting and stressful and sometimes it is a bit scary. And, this is true not only for youngsters, but parents, and school staff. Many handle all this without significant problems. Others need schools to do something to make the transition go smoothly. And, even those who handle the transition could benefit from proactive transition programs designed to make them feel welcome and well-oriented to the new setting. Such programs are an indispensable facet of creating a positive school climate and sense of community.

With specific respect to articulation programs, some are designed for all students; others target those seen as likely to have difficulty making the transition. Some are designed for a relatively short period just before the transition (e.g., 1-2 weeks). Others begin the process at mid year. A few continue the process into the new setting. All approaches involve some form of activity to reduce anxiety by addressing concerns and enhancing ability.

Key elements of such transition programs include:

- providing information and transition counseling, including making orientation and "warm-up" visits when feasible;
- teaching "survival" skills;
- training and helping teachers and support staff identify potential transition problems quickly and redesign classroom and school-wide transition tasks so they are not barriers;
- ensuring social support, such as student-to-student and family-to-family "buddy" programs; (This may involve linking students who are making the transition and/or, in the case of transitions to middle or high school, providing an older peer buddy in the new setting. Also, for middle and high school transitions, homerooms have been used to provide support networks and supportive guidance and counseling.)
- ensuring the family is prepared to provide transition support for the student – including seeking assistance as soon as there is an indication that the transition is a problem.

An even broader approach involves working on the whole school environment to make it more welcoming, caring, and supportive of all newcomers and especially those who are having difficulty.

Finally, some efforts focus on priming new settings to accommodate the needs of specific students and monitoring transitions to detect transition problems and then providing special assistance.

Two Major Things a School Should Do

>Create a welcoming environment that provides students, families and staff with a **sense of community**

A perception of community is shaped by daily experiences and is engendered when all involved feel welcomed, supported, nurtured, respected, liked, connected to others, and feel they are valued members who contribute to the collective identity, destiny, and vision.

>Ensure that in the first months of the new year, students have made a **good transition**

Some student experience difficulties adjusting to new classes, new schools, new teachers, new classmates. If these difficulties are not addressed, student motivation for school dwindles and behavior problems increase.

Because schools have a yearly rhythm -- changing with the cycle and demands of the school calendar -- each month the Center features on our website some ideas and activities for use in enhancing support for students, their families, and the staff at a school. The feature entitled: *Ideas for Enhancing Support at your schools* is organized around themes.

The following are examples relevant to the two matters highlighted on the preceding page:

September: ***Welcoming Strategies for Students & Their Families***

Included are strategies for providing office staff with training and resources so they can create a welcoming supportive atmosphere for everyone who enters the school

October: ***Ensuring students have made a good adjustment to school***

Included are ways to address transition problems, enhance engagement in learning, and how to work as a team to prevent problems from escalating

And, thinking ahead, there are steps to take in the spring in anticipation of next year.

May: ***Time to Help Students and Families Plan Successful Transitions to a New Grade or a New School***

Included is a focus on providing closure related to what the student is leaving behind and enhancing articulation between the old and the new.

Go to the Center website homepage (http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu) and click on *Ideas for Enhancing Support at your schools* to access the recommended practices. Each month is archived.

"Getting a new school year off to a good start can influence children's attitude, confidence, and performance both socially and academically. The transition from August to September can be difficult for children and parents. Even children who are eager to return to class must adjust to the greater levels of activity, structure, and, for some, pressures associated with school life.... [It is important to] acknowledge anxiety over a bad experience the previous year. Children who had a difficult time academically or socially, or were teased or bullied may be more fearful or reluctant to return to school...."

Excerpted from:

Back-To-School Transitions: What Parents Can Do
by T. Feinberg & K. Cowan
National Association of School Psychologists
http://www.naspcenter.org/b2shandout.html

This article provides many suggestions for parents to help ease the transition.

Some New Ways Schools Are Using to Ease the Transition to a New Year

School reform and improvement strategies are beginning to address ways to minimize the numbers of times students have to face the newness of a new year.

>>Rather than waiting until the middle of the first semester, teachers have ***initial conferences*** with students to get to know them and their interests to begin to build a working relationship in the first weeks of the school year.

>>Rather than an open house for parents focused on the rules and expectations, parents are invited to attend initial ***family conferences*** to share their hopes and concerns and how they can work to support the classroom and school.

>>In elementary schools, the concept of ***"looping"*** calls for a teacher to move with the students to the next grade, rather than sending them to another teacher. Potential benefits reported include improved student achievement, increased time on task, more opportunities for bonding between teacher and students (and their families), diminished apprehension about a new school year, more positive peer relationships, increased support for students, enhanced sense of school as a "community". (For more on this, see "Looping: Adding Time, Strengthening Relationships" by D. Burke, 1997, ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed414098.html)

>>In secondary schools this concept is encompassed in efforts to make big schools into "***small schools***." The idea is to group a cohort of students (say 100) with a cohort of teachers (say 5) who stay together over a number of years with the teachers working as a team providing among them the full curriculum. For example in middle school, this arrangement may allow the cohort of students and teachers to remain together for the three years of middle school. This reduces the sense that a new year means new teachers and new classmates. Rather, there is a strong and building connection between the cohort of students and with their team of teachers. Some of the reported benefits are higher achievement, lower achievement gaps across races, lower dropout rates, lower suspension rates, and increased participation. (For research on the academic and social benefits, see "Restructuring Big Schools," by the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future – http://www.nctaf.org/smalschools/05-restruct.html).

>>Calls for *New Directions for Student Support* emphasize the importance of student support staff assuming new roles and functions to address the full range of transitions and to play a role in helping schools make major changes in school design. (For more on this, click on "Summits on New Directions" on our Center's homepage – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu)

Want more ideas?

See: *School Reform Proposals: The Research Evidence* by A. Molnar (Ed.) (2002). Education Policy Studies Laboratory/Education Policy Research Unit, Arizona State Univ. http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/Reports/epru/EPRU%/202002-101/epru-2002-101.htm

Special Transition Concerns in Moving from Primary to Elementary ... to Middle ... to High School

From a transitions perspective, is it better to have primary school (grades k-2), elementary school (grades 3-5), middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12)? Or would K-8 followed by high school be better?

What Does the Research Say?

With respect to transitions *during the elementary school years*, Gregg (2002) notes:

> "..a substantial body of new research demonstrated that decreasing grade spans ... and multiplying students' transitions from school to school negatively impacts student achievement.... Schools with narrow grade spans and fewer grade levels per building experience frequent student turnover.... As the number of school-to-school transitions increased, there was an associated increase in the high school dropout rate.... Given these findings, it would appear obvious that a district requiring four transitions from kindergarten to high school would cause a higher dropout rate than a district requiring only one or two transitions."
>
> *Elementary School Grade Span Configuration: New Evidence on Students Achievement, Achievement Equity, and Cost Efficiency*
> http://phkhome.northstarnet.org/ikepto/GradeCenterReport.htm

With respect to transitioning from elementary to middle school, Berliner (1993) stresses:

> "...The transition from elementary to secondary school represents for many students a stressful move from the nest of a protective, familiar environment with considerable individual attention to an often impersonal, intimidating atmosphere. School size is significantly larger, academic standards are more rigorous, social circles and peer pressures change more profoundly than at any other time in life, discipline is more abruptly delivered, and students often believe their performance is assessed publicly and has lifelong implications...The simultaneous experience of multiple life stressors or the earlier elementary patterns of absenteeism, academic deficiencies, or behavior related to poverty increase the likelihood of serious adjustment problems. Other studies conclude that adjustment difficulties are likely due to the mismatched teaching, learning, and organizational environment of the secondary school. The developmental needs of early adolescents and the demanding transitions that occur during this stage of life can also contribute to adjustment difficulties...."
>
> *Adolescence, School Transitions, and Prevention: A Research-Based Primer*
> http://www.nwrac.org/pub/livrary/a/a_adolesc.pdf

Excerpt from: **The Transition to Middle School.**
by D. Schumacher (1998). ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

"...Student comments and behaviors give insight into their concerns as they move to a new school. Students in Gwinnett County, Georgia, when asked about their concerns in facing a school transition, mentioned the following worries: (1) getting to class on time, (2) finding lockers, (3) keeping up with "materials," (4) finding lunch-rooms and bathrooms, (5) getting on the right bus to go home, (6) getting through the crowded halls, and (7) remembering which class to go to next (Weldy, 1991). In addition to these concerns, other studies include personal safety (aggressive and violent behaviors of other students) as a prominent concern of students (Anderman & Kimweli, 1997; Arowosafe & Irvin, 1992; Odegaard & Heath, 1992)

Social Factors

Students' perceptions of the quality of school life decline as they progress from elementary to secondary school, with the largest decline occurring during the transition to a middle level school (Diemert, 1992). Meeting social needs during the transition from an elementary to a middle level school is a major consideration because most programs focus more on academics and regulations....

Organizational Factors

Students who move into middle level schools from elementary grades that rotate students between classes at least part of the day reported feeling better prepared to enter a middle level school. Waggoner (1994) investigated transition concerns and the self-esteem of 171 sixth-graders. Students from teamed settings in elementary schools demonstrated a stronger affiliation in school activities and fewer concerns about the transition to junior high school than students in self-contained sixth-grade classrooms...

Motivational Factors

In middle level schools, it is important to emphasize mastery and improvement, rather than relative ability and social comparison. Empirical evidence suggests that middle schools tend to stress relative ability and competition among students more, and effort and improvement less, leading to a decline in task goals, ability goals, and academic efficacy. Working in groups, focusing on effort and improvement, and being given choices all support a more positive task-focused goal structure (Anderman & Midgley, 1996).

Effective and Comprehensive Transition Programs

The transition into middle level schools is accompanied by intellectual, moral, social, emotional, and physical changes taking place in at least part of the transition group at any given time. Students making the transition into middle level schools need to receive assistance prior to, during, and after the move so that their social, psychological, and academic well-being is not compromised. Effective and comprehensive transition programs help (1) build a sense of community; (2) respond to the needs and concerns of the students; and (3) provide appropriate, faceted approaches to facilitate the transition process.

(cont.)

The Transition to Middle School (cont.)

The following guidelines are suggested for planning transition programs (Weldy, 1991):

- Provide several activities that will involve students,parents, teachers, and staff from both schools in the transition process.
- Establish a transition protocol that can be easily replicated and updated annually with little effort.
- Establish a timeline for the transition process.
- Schedule meetings between collaborative groups from sending and receiving schools and discussions for adults and students about the issues.
- Assess the human and financial resources available to support the transition process. Identify adult and student leaders from all schools and constituencies to help with the transition.
- Ask students, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and others to evaluate the transition program.

Transition Activities

The following examples may be helpful in selecting or creating a transition plan to best suit your community:

- The need for curriculum articulation for all teachers at all levels should be clearly understood. Teachers from sending and receiving schools can meet to discuss curriculum and instructional practices.
- Teachers from receiving schools can visit the sending schools to initiate personal contacts.
- Letters can be sent home welcoming students and families, and inviting them to school activities.
- Parent Teacher Association members can call each new family welcoming them to the school.
- Guidance counselors and special education teachers from each school can meet to share information.
- Students of the receiving school can become "ambassadors" of goodwill. Student-to-student contact, preceded by a discussion of what information might be useful to new students, can help establish personal links. Sending-school students can be paired with receiving-school students for visitation days.
- Letters between students in the sending and receiving schools can be exchanged.
- Programs new to the entering students can be highlighted during student visitations.
- An unstructured open house can be held prior to the opening day of school; a structured evening open house can be held during the second week of school.
- A school handbook can be distributed to each family. Be sure to include phone numbers; school history; yearly schedules; teachers identified by grade level, team, and subject taught; bell schedules; lunch procedures; and other practical information.

The School Community

The students, teachers, administrators, parents, staff, business partners, and residents in each school community contribute to the establishment, communication, and refinement of the various factors that define their middle level school. Effective middle level transition programs establish a sense of belonging among the multiple constituencies involved, appropriately respond to the needs of the incoming students, and provide multiple opportunities for all constituencies to develop a meaningful role during the transition process as well as maintain that role throughout the school year.

(cont.)

The Transition to Middle School (cont.)

For More Information (note: this is a partial listing, see original document for complete list)

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Mizelle, Nancy B., & Mullins, Elizabeth. (1997). Transition into and out of middle school. In Judith L. Irvin (Ed.), *What current research says to the middle level practitioner.* Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.

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Weldy, Gilbert R. (1995). Critical transitions. *Schools in the Middle,* 4(3), 4-7. EJ 499 102.

In *Helping Middle School Students Make the Transition into High School*, Mizelle (1999) states:

> "Young adolescents entering high school look forward to having more choices and making new and more friends; however, they also are concerned about being picked on and teased by older students, having harder work, making lower grades, and getting lost in a larger, unfamiliar school (Mizelle, 1995; Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994).
>
> As young adolescents make the transition into high school, many experience a decline in grades and attendance (Barone, Aguirre-Deandreis, & Trickett, 1991); they view themselves more negatively and experience an increased need for friendships (Hertzog et al., 1996); and by the end of 10th grade, as many as 6% drop out of school (Owings & Peng, 1992)....
>
> Research has found, however, that when middle school students took part in a high school transition program with several diverse articulation activities, fewer students were retained in the transition grade (Mac Iver, 1990)."
>
> ERIC Clearning on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
> http://ericeece.org/pubs/digest.:/1999/mizell99.html

In general, the research on moving on to high school makes it clear that a successful transition for many students must include extra support for learning in a way that enhances motivation and engagement. For example, the Southern Regional Education Board cites research showing that

>More students fail ninth grade than any other grade of school
>Poor and minority students are twice as likely as others to be retained
>Students who repeat at least one year are three times more likely to drop out of school
>60% of students with multiple risk factors in eight grade graduate from high school, compared to 90% of other students

Excerpt from: *Connecting entrance and departure: The transition to ninth grade and high school dropout* by R. Neild, et al (2001)
http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.e.../dropouts/call_dropoutpapers.php?Page

"...The importance of the ninth grade year suggests that reducing the enormous dropout rates in large cities will require attention to the transition to high school.... Urban teenagers who leave school without graduating often have experienced earlier crisis points in high school, notably severe academic difficulty during the first year of high school ... enabling students to make a successful transition into high school should be one of the highest priorities of urban high schools trying to reduce their dropout rates....

When they begin the ninth grade, urban students often encounter high schools that are large, impersonal, and deeply disorganized. It is easy for a ninth grader to get lost in the shuffle, skip school without consequence, or quietly fail without any concerted intervention by the school.... Absent a school-wide intervention to improve outcomes for ninth graders, individual teachers may conclude that nothing can be done and that widespread course failure in inevitable...."

An Example of a transition to high school

Over the years, a variety of projects have demonstrated the value of articulation programs. For example, in 1997, Sheets at al. reported on *Bridge,* a program designed to ease the transition between middle and high school. It is a one-semester program for all incoming ninth grade students, providing them with activities that promote academic achievement, responsibility, school spirit, fellowship, acceptance, and empowerment. Non-Bridge ninth graders had a 22% withdrawal rate from school(dropouts and transfers) while only 5% of Bridge ninth graders withdrew. Bridge students were disciplined less (22%) than controls (34%). As tenth graders, Bridge students averaged 75.8% of their grades above C (controls averaged 68% of grades above C). See: Sheets, R.A., Izard-Baldwin, G., & Atterberry, P. (December,1997). Bridge: A Program Designed to Ease the Transition from the Middle Level to the High School. *Bulletin, 81*(593). National Association of Secondary School Principals. For more info, contact gizard@cks.ssd.k12.wa.us.

2. Vacations and Intersessions

For school staff and students vacations are a welcome time for rest and relaxation.

They can also be a time for enrichment, practicing for mastery, exploring new learning, and strengthening motivation for learning – for students and for staff.

Because this is such an important opportunity for strengthing learning support, it is included in the *Monthly Themes in Ideas for Enhancing Support at your School* on our website. See:

December: **Re-engaging Students: Using a student's *time off* in ways that *pay off!***

June: **Summer and the Living Aint Easy** (http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu)

Most student vacations occur during the summer with a brief break mid-winter. In large urban districts with year round multi-track schools, the vacation (called intersession) can occur at any time the track goes off for a brief break.

For many students, vacations mean camp, travel, reading, time with family. For some students it means limited opportunity for learning. For others it means remedial programs to strengthen skills. We are especially interested in the last two groups: students who aren't in family/neighborhoods that provide enriched learning opportunities. What can learning support staff provide during these transitions that would result in better outcomes for students and schools?

What Does the Research Say about the Impact of School Vacations?

Learning loss and increases in risky behavior are major worries related to students who aren't in school during the summer. As the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Summer Learning reports in their document *Primer on Summer Learning Loss:*

> Low-income children and youth experience greater summer learning losses than their higher income peers. On average, middle-income students experience slight gains in reading performance over the summer months. Low-income students experience an average summer learning loss in reading achievement of over two months. (Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., & Greathouse, S. (1996). The effects of summer vacation on achievement test scores: A narrative and meta-analytic review. Review of Educational Research, 66, 227-268)

> Studies show that out-of-school time is a dangerous time for unsupervised children and teens. They are more likely to use alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; engage in criminal and other high-risk behaviors; receive poor grades; and drop out of school than those who have the opportunity to benefit from constructive activities supervised by responsible adults. (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. A matter of time: risk and opportunity in the out-of-school hours: recommendations for strengthening community programs for youth. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1994)

Using the Summer Productively

School personnel (especially support staff), working with the community, need to help develop summer month programs that help address barriers to learning, promote healthy development, and enhance equity of opportunity. As stressed in *Primer on Summer Learning Loss: If policymakers are serious about improving excellence and equity in public education, social science research suggests that high-quality summer programs must become a significant and central component in school reform efforts.*

Below are a few excerpts from the ***Primer on Summer Learning Loss:***

- All young people should have consistent access to high-quality summer enrichment programs throughout their educational careers. Programs should be proactive and offered for multiple summers.

- Elementary schools and youth development organizations should form partnerships to prevent summer loss in reading among low-income students. ... Teachers and youth development professionals should use the summers to collaborate and bridge gaps between schools and youth programs. Summer programs should incorporate research-based practices for improving cognitive development from high-quality after-school enrichment programs. . . . Summer learning should be a community-wide, inter-agency priority. There are a wide variety of roles that public agencies, community-based organizations, cultural institutions, and colleges and universities can play in improving the quality and quantity of summer learning opportunities for all young people. Improved collaboration and leveraging of funds from multiple sources will help ensure greater levels of access to programs.

- Program models should maintain a strong academic focus, but also acknowledge the unique role that summers play within American culture. Summer programs can demonstrate the power of informal learning experiences such as reading and discussing books for pleasure and gaining exposure to new cultures and ideas.

- Summer programs should be used to support the recruitment, professional development, and retention of teachers and youth program staff. ... Summers should be used to encourage teachers to try new techniques, teach different subjects or grades, acquire new skills and mentor new colleagues. Simultaneously, summers could be used to attract current college students or recent graduates to internship experiences in public school classrooms and with non-profit youth development organizations.

Are Remedial Summer School Programs Effective?

[Research suggests:] Whether teachers knew their students before summer school was an important predictor of test-score increases and teacher practice. ... The quality of interactions between teachers and students was a distinguishing factor between the most effective and the average classrooms. Students whose teachers spent more time individualizing the curriculum and working with students outside of class had greater learning gains than students in classrooms where teachers spent less time adapting the curriculum and providing individualized attention. ...

Many Ways to Learn During the Summer

Of course, summer provides an opportunity to introduce many ideas for making both the content and the process of teaching and learning more relevant to students. As suggested above, active learning is especially important. There are many ways to promote active learning at all grade levels. It can take the form of class discussions, problem based and discovery learning, a project approach, involvement in learning centers, experiences outside the classroom, and independent learning in or out of school. Students may become involved in classroom, school-wide, or community service or action projects. Older students may be involved in "internships" or service learning. Service learning involves students in identifying a real community need, ties the community work with academic goals, encourages the students to reflect on and evaluate their learning, and strengths the relationship between community and school.

"...It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of innovation and creativity in meeting the needs of struggling student. Summer school involves intensive reteaching of materials that students did not master during the school year, but those students need help that goes beyond simply reteaching the same materials in the same way...

What is the "something different" that summer schools need to do? Doing "something different" often means connecting subject matter to real-life situations that are relevant to students. It might mean finding books about baseball to read and using baseball statistics in math instruction for a student who lives and breathes the sport. It could involve using musical themes to engage a student who constantly drums on his desk or incorporating a lot of physical movement to reach the aspiring dancer. It might mean using technology that presents materials in a game-like format. It might mean simply giving a student the opportunity to discuss the material with teachers and peers to an extent not possible in the regular classroom..."

From: The Southern Regional Education Board report *Summer School: Unfulfilled Promise*, 2002, http://www.sreb.org.

For more information on service learning see
Building Community Through Service Learning
http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/44/03/4403.pdf

For more about engaging students in learning during summer and all year round, see the following Center Materials and Resources at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>>Quick Finds:
- *After School Programs
- *Classroom Focused Enabling
- *Environments that support learning
- *Mentoring
- *Motivation
- *Youth Development

>>After School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning
(a Technical Aid Packet)

>>Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling
(Continuing Education Modules)

>>Classroom Changes to Enhance and Re-engage Students in Learning
(A Training Tutorial)

>>Re-engaging Students in Learning
(A Quick Training Aid)

D. Mobility – Moving, Moving, Moving

Many students move during a school year; some move quite frequently. Sometimes the move only involves going to a new school; sometime it also involves moving to a new city and even a new country.

1. Impact of Student Mobility on Learning and Behavior

As the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry stresses:

> Moving to a new community may be one of the most stress-producing experiences a family faces. Frequent moves or even a single move can be especially hard on children and adolescents. Studies show children who move frequently are more likely to have problems at schools....
>
> Moves interrupt friendships. To a new child at school, it may at first seem that everyone else has a best friend or is securely involved with a group of peers. The child must get used to a different schedule and curriculum, and may be ahead in certain subjects and behind in others. This situation may make the child stressed, anxious or bored....
>
> In general, the older the child, the more difficult he or she will have with the move because of the increasing importance of the peer group....
>
> The more frequently a family moves, the more important is the need for internal stability. With the proper attention from parents, and professional help if necessary, moving can be a positive growth experience for children, leading to increased self-confidence and interpersonal skills.
>
> Excerpt from: ***Children and Family Moves***
> http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/fmlymove.htm

A study reported to the Pediatric Academic Societies (5/4/03) indicates that

> Children who frequently change schools are more likely than those who don't to have behavioral health problems.
>
> School mobility is an independent predictor of behavioral problems regardless of one's race, income, or maternal education level.

According to one of the investigators (Mona Mansour of the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center) "Transitions can be so disruptive to children that parents need to weigh the potential academic benefit they may get versus the academic, social and emotional impact of making the transitions."

The study found that 14% of the children in the national sample of 3,285 were mobile (i.e., two or more elementary schools for 5 to 9 year olds; three or more schools for 9 to 14 year olds.) The children were also more likely to have non-married mothers, mothers with lower levels of school involvement, and mothers with symptoms of depression.

"For students, the long-term effects of high mobility include lower achievement levels and slower academic pacing, culminating in a reduced likelihood of high school completion. For residentially unstable students, such as homeless, migrant and foster care children high mobility is another barrier, among others, to an adequate education. Low-income and minority students are more likely to experience excessive classroom mobility, and the deleterious effects of this transience are most severe for such students ... the vast majority of school mobility is the result of housing instability...."

Excerpt from ***Addressing the Causes and Consequences of High Student Mobility: The Role of School Systems and Communities***
American Youth Policy Forum. Http://www.aypf.org

For a detailed look at student mobility, see the above reference and

>>>The General Accounting Office report "***Elementary School Children: Many Change Schools Frequently, Harming their Education***"
Report No GAO/HEHS-94-45.

>>>***Rural Student Mobility***
http://www.ncrel.org/policy/pubs/html/rmobile/executiv.htm

>>>***The Educational Consequences of Mobility for California Students and Schools*** (http://pace.berkeley.edu)

Mobility Has an Impact on Nonmobile Students Too

Researchers at the Center for School Improvement at the University of Chicago found that student mobility in Chicago was primarily localized: 80% of mobility was within the district. Students appear to move within networks of schools. These networks are made up of schools that are highly similar in terms of student racial and income composition. As a result of high student mobility, teachers spend more time with new students to orient them and materials are reviewed repeatedly for new students, leading to fewer topics covered over the course of a school year. Thus student mobility influences the education of both mobile and stable students. Findings indicate that by 6th grade, highly mobile students fall behind about 2/3 of a year, but by 6th grade stable students in schools which experience high student mobility fall behind about ½ year. To address the problem, the school district has instituted "Staying Put: A multi-level campaign to increase awareness about the effects of mobility on student achievement." For information see http://www.chicagopanel.org.

2. Special Concerns of Students from Other Countries

Youngsters entering a new school and neighborhood are confronted with multiple transitional challenges. These are compounded when the transition also involves recent arrival in a new country and culture. In the short-run, failure to cope well with these challenges can result in major learning and behavior problems; in the long-run, the psychological and social impact can be devastating.

> "Many of these children have to overcome poor academic preparation in their country of origin and nearly all have to learn English and new institutional and cultural customs and norms. As a result, there are growing concerns about how these children are performing in U.S. schools...and in turn about the new set of demands they are placing upon these institutions. These concerns are exacerbated by the increasing diversity of languages and cultures that these students bring with them and their high concentration in a few areas of the country...."
>
> RAND report "How Immigrants Fare in U.S. Education"
> http://www.rand.org.

For more information on transitions for immigrant students, see

"Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents" (Provides guidance on intake centers and newcomer schools) http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed402786.html

"Secondary Newcomer Programs: Helping Recent Immigrants Prepare for School Success"
http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed419385.html

"Qualities of Effective Programs for Immigrant Adolescents with Limited Schooling"
http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed423667.html

Harvard Immigration Projects: Immigration Resources
(http://www.gse.harvard.edu)

New teachers and other new staff coming to a school are in transition too. They need to be welcomed and oriented and provided with immediate social support.

"Biculturation Groups"

The increased influx of immigrants to the U.S. has resulted in renewed attention to the problem of facilitating effective transitions. For students, schools have introduced programs to address specific transitional skill and counseling needs.

At one school these groups are called "Biculturation Groups." As newly enrolled students visit the nurses office for immunizations, a prerequisite to school enrollment, she uses the opportunity to screen those who may need psychological transition support. Essentially, the screening focuses on whether or not the individual currently has an effective social support network (e.g., a home situation where accultration problems are discussed and problems pursued). Thus most who join the groups are individuals in need of a social support network. In coming to the U.S. not only may they have left parents and other close relatives behind, they currently may be living with people they do not really know. (Ironically, in some cases, the youngster has left a cherished relative to rejoin a parent who they haven't lived with for many years.) Moreover, they seldom have friends to turn to for help.

In initiating and maintaining biculturation (and other) groups, the emphasis is on ensuring that youngsters experience immediate and ongoing benefits. During group discussions, students commonly indicate feeling isolated and unhappy. Some of their concerns are related to accultration problems (not knowing how to deal with the school and community, grief reactions for what has been lost in moving here, a desire to return home because the student didn't want to come or it isn't working out). However, some concerns are related to common problems of growing up, which can be exacerbated by the student's immigrant status (e.g., conflicts with parents, guardians, school staff, peers; financial or job worries, academic problems personal isolation and alienation). Also there are a variety of concerns stemming from preimmigration problems (e.g., childhood physical and sexual abuse, war related trauma, ongoing grief reactions).

As the above concerns suggest, the group leader can draw on an understanding of the problems found among adolescents, in general, and among those attending a specific school. At the same time, however, it is important to acquire a sense of additional transition problems immigrants and other newcomers encounter. This requires an appreciation of the general nature of such transitions and how the specific school and community may be making the process easier or more difficult. Finally, one must be especially sensitive to what the newcomer may also have experienced in the way of previous traumatic events.

Students tend to terminate as they establish satisfying support mechanisms at school or at home. For those who leave the group without other sources of support, it is wise to recontact them after a few weeks to evaluate how things are going and to invite them back if they need ongoing support.

In general, it seems clear that, for newcomers, the period of transition can, like a crisis, be a time of dangerous opportunity. A transition group can help minimize the danger and maximize opportunity.

Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming & Social Support

Youngsters entering a new school and neighborhood are confronted with multiple transition challenges. The challenges are compounded when the transition also involves recent arrival to a new country and culture. In the short run, failure to cope effectively with these challenges can result in major learning and behavior problems; in the long run, the psychological and social impacts may be devastating.

Cárdenas, Taylor, Adelman (1993)

From the perspective of addressing barriers to learning, welcoming and social support are essential facets of every school's transition programs. Estimates suggest 20-25% of students change schools each year. The figures are greater in school districts with large immigrant populations. While some make the transition easily, many find themselves alienated or "out-of-touch" in new surroundings.

Youngsters entering a new school and neighborhood are confronted with multiple transition challenges. The challenges are compounded when the transition also involves recent arrival in a new country and culture.

Youngsters vary in capability and motivation with respect to dealing with psychological transition into new settings. Students entering late in a school year often find it especially hard to connect and adjust. Making friends means finding ways to be accepted into a complex social milieu. School-wide strategies to ensure school adjustment of newly entering students and their families can reduce adjustment problems, ease bicultural development, enhance student performance, and establish a psychological sense of community throughout the school.

Welcoming and Social Support as Indicators of School Reform

Welcoming new students and their families is part of the broader reform goal of creating schools where staff, students and families interact positively and identify with the school and its goals.

Programs and related mechanisms and processes are needed to foster smooth transitions and positive social interactions facilitate social support provide opportunities for ready access to information and for learning how to function effectively in the school culture encourage involvement in decision-making.

How well a school welcomes and involves new students and families are basic signs of program quality and staff attitudes. As such, these indicators probably are good predictors of a school's overall impact.

Of course, for efforts to make welcoming and social support at schools more than another desired but unachieved set of reform aims, policy makers at all levels must take action. It is patently unfair to hold specific schools accountable for yet another major systemic change if they are not given the backing necessary to accomplish it. In an era when new sources of funding are unlikely, it is clear that such programs must be assigned a high priority, and funds must be reallocated in keeping with the level of priority. To do less is to guarantee the status quo.

Phases of Intervention

Interventions for welcoming and involving new students and families are as complex as any other psychological and educational intervention. This is especially so since the focus must not only be on those entering at the beginning of a term but on all who enter throughout the year. Clearly, the activity requires considerable time, space, materials, and competence. Specific strategies evolve over three overlapping phases:

(1) The first phase is broadly focused – using general procedures to welcome and facilitate adjustment and participation of all who are ready, willing, and able.

(2) Some people need just a bit more personalized assistance. Such assistance may include personal invitations, ongoing support for interacting with others and becoming involved in activities, aid in overcoming minor barriers to successful adjustment, a few more options to enable effective functioning and make participation more attractive, and so forth.

(3) More is needed for those who have not made an

effective adjustment or who remain uninvolved (e.g., due to major barriers, an intense lack of interest, or negative attitudes). This phase requires continued use of personalized contacts, as well as addition of cost intensive outreach procedures as feasible.

In pursuing each phase, a major concern is overcoming barriers that make it hard for newcomers to function in the new community and school. Research points to a variety of familial, cultural, job,
social class, communication, and school personnel attitude factors that hinder transitions. Barriers can be categorized as institutional, personal, or impersonal. Each type includes negative attitudes, lack of mechanisms and skills, or practical deterrents. For instance, institutional barriers encompass a lack of policy commitment to welcoming, inadequate resources (money, space, time), lack of interest or hostile attitudes on the part of staff, administration, and community, and failure to establish and maintain necessary mechanisms and skills to ensure program success.

Key Intervention Tasks

In pursuing each intervention phase, there are four major intervention tasks:

1. Establishing a mechanism for planning, implementing, and evolving programmatic activity

2. Creating welcoming and initial home involvement strategies (e.g., information and outreach to new students and families; a school-wide welcoming atmosphere; a series of specific "New Student/New Parent Orientation" processes)

3. Providing social supports and facilitating involvement (e.g., peer buddies; personal invitations to join relevant ongoing activities)

4. Maintaining support and involvement – including provision of special help for an extended period of time if necessary

Task 1: A Program Mechanism

Like any other program, efforts to welcome and involve new students and families require institutional commitment, organization, and ongoing involvement. That is, the program must be school-owned, and there must be a mechanism dedicated to effective program planning, implementation, and long-term evolution.

One useful mechanism is a Welcoming Steering Committee. Such a committee is designed to (a) adopt new strategies that fit in with what a school already is doing and (b) provide leadership for evolving and maintaining a welcoming program. The group usually consists of a school administrator (e.g., principal or AP), a support service person (e.g., a dropout counselor, Title I coordinator, school psychologist), one or more interested teachers, the staff member who coordinates volunteers, an office staff representative, and hopefully a few dedicated parents.

Task 2: Creating Welcoming and Initial Home Involvement Strategies

It is not uncommon for students and parents to feel unwelcome at school. The problem may begin with their first contacts. Efforts to enhance welcoming and facilitate involvement must counter factors that make the setting uninviting and develop ways to make it attractive. This can be viewed as the welcoming or invitation problem.

From a psychological perspective, welcoming is enmeshed with attitudes school staff, students, and parents hold about involving new students and families. Welcoming is facilitated when attitudes are positive. And, positive attitudes seem most likely when those concerned perceive personal benefits as outweighing potential costs (e.g., psychological and tangible).

A prime focus in addressing welcoming is on ensuring that most communications and interactions between the school and students and families convey a welcoming tone. This is conveyed through formal communications to students and families, procedures for reaching out to individuals, and informal interactions.

An early emphasis in addressing the welcoming problem should be on establishing formal processes that:

1. convey a general sense of welcome to all

2. extend a personalized invitation to those who appear to need something more.

(cont.)

Communications and invitations to students and their families can be done in two forms:

1. general communications (e.g., oral and written communications when a new student registers, classroom announcements, mass distribution of flyers, newsletters)

2. special, personalized contacts (e.g., personal conferences and notes from the teacher).

For those who are not responsive to general invitations, the next logical step is to extend special invitations and increase personalized contact. Special invitations are directed at designated individuals and are intended to overcome personal attitudinal barriers and can be used to elicit information about other persisting barriers.

Task 3: Providing Social Supports and Facilitating Involvement

Social supports and specific processes to facilitate involvement are necessary to:

(a) address barriers
(b) sanction participation of new students/ families in any option and to the degree each finds feasible (e.g., initially legitimizing minimal involvement and frequent changes in area of involvement)
(c) account for cultural and individual diversity
(d) enable those with minimal skills to participate
(e) provide social and academic supports to improve participation skills.

In all these facilitative efforts, established peers (students and parents) can play a major role as peer welcomers and mentors.

If a new student or family is extremely negative, exceptional efforts may be required. In cases where the negative attitude stems from skill deficits (e.g., doesn't speak English, lacks social or functional skills), providing special assistance with skills is a logical and relatively direct approach. However, all such interventions must be pursued in ways that minimize stigma and maximize positive attitudes.

Some reluctant new arrivals may be reached, initially, by offering them an activity designed to give them additional personal support. For example, newcomers can be offered a mutual interest group composed of others with the same cultural background or a mutual support group (e.g., a bicultural transition group for students or parents -- Cárdenas, Taylor, & Adelman, 1993; a parent self-help group – Simoni & Adelman, 1990). Parent groups might even meet away from the school at a time when working parents can participate. (The school's role would be to help initiate the groups and provide consultation as needed.) Relatedly, it is important to provide regular opportunities for students, families, and staff to share their heritage and interests and celebrate the cultural and individual diversity of the school community.

Task 4: Maintaining Involvement

As difficult as it is to involve some newcomers initially, maintaining their involvement may be even a more difficult matter. Maintaining involvement can be seen as a problem of:

(a) providing continuous support for learning, growth, and success (including feedback about how involvement is personally beneficial)

(b) minimizing feelings of incompetence and being blamed, censured, or coerced.

A critical element in establishing a positive sense of community at a school and of facilitating students school adjustment and performance is involvement of families in schooling. This is why parent involvement in schools is a prominent item on the education reform agenda. It is, of course, not a new concern. As Davies (1987) reminds us, the "questions and conflict about parent and community relationships to schools began in this country when schools began" (p. 147). Reviews of the literature on parents and schooling indicates wide endorsement of parent involvement.

With respect to students with school problems, parent involvement has been mostly discussed in legal terms (e.g., participation in the IEP process). There has been little systematic attention paid to the value of and ways to involve the home in the efforts to improve student achievement. (The term, parent involvement, and even family involvement is too limiting. Given extended families, the variety of child caretakers, and the influence of older siblings, the concern would seem minimally one of involving the home.)

(cont.)

To involve the home, a staff must reach out to parents and others in the home and encourage them to drop in, be volunteers, go on field trips, participate in creating a community newsletter, organize social events, plan and attend learning workshops, meet with the teacher to learn more about their child's curriculum and interests, and establish family social networks. It is imperative that the only contact not be when they are called in to discuss their child's learning and/or behavior problems. When those in the home feel unwelcome or "called on the carpet," they cannot be expected to view the school as an inviting setting.

Steps in Welcoming: Key Elements and Activities

In pursuing strategies for enhancing welcoming and home involvement a first concern is to ensure a positive welcome at the various initial encounters school staff have with a new student and family (see attached Exhibit).

Each point of contact represents an opportunity and a challenge with respect to welcoming new students and families, linking them with social supports, assisting them to make a successful transition, and identifying those who do not so that individual school adjustment needs can be addressed.

##########

We need to exert our efforts to make the school a place where differences, between and among people, are not merely tacitly accepted but are celebrated as a national blessing.

W. L. Smith (1974)

##########

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For more resources in addressing the transition of mobile students, see Center resources at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>>*Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families* (a technical aid packet)

>>Cultural Concerns in Addressing Barriers to Learning (an introductory packet)

Quick Finds on:

>>*Cultural Competence*
>>*Homeless children and youth*
>>*Immigrant Students and Mental* Health
>>*Support for transitions*

Exhibit. Outline of Welcoming Steps and Activities

1. Family Comes to Register
Staff/volunteer designated to welcome and provide information to all family members
Provides information (in primary languages) about:
(a) needed documents
(e.g., Information card)
(b) how to get help related to getting documents
(c) directions for newcomers
(d) making a registration appointment

2. Registration Appointment
Ensure that the registrar has time to welcome, register, and begin orientation Orientation staff and peers take over and

Do a Welcome Interview that can clarify newcomer interests and other information they desire
Provide information about:
(a) How the school runs each day
(b) Special activities for parents and students
(c) Community services they may find helpful
(d) Parents who are ready to help them join in
(e) Students ready to meet with new students to help them join in
(f) How parents can help their child learn and do well at school

Conduct a tour
Make initial introductions to teacher/principal/others

Based primarily on teacher preference (but also taking into consideration parent and student interests), student might stay for rest of school day or start the next day.

3a. Student Begins Transition-in Phase
Teacher introduces student to classmates and program
Peer "buddy" is identified (to work with in class, go to recess and lunch with at least for first week)
Teacher or peer buddy gives student welcoming "gift" (e.g., notebook with school name, pencils); teacher gives peer buddy "thank you gift" (e.g. notebook with school name, certificate, etc)
Designated students introduce and invite new student to out of class school activities

3b. Parent Begins Transition-in Phase
Designated staff or volunteer (e.g., a parent) either meets with parents on registration day or contacts parent during next few days to discuss activities in which they might be interested
Designated parent invites and introduces new parent to an activity in which the new parent has expressed interest or may find useful
At first meeting attended, new parent is given awelcoming "gift" (e.g., calendar with school name; coupons donated by neighborhood merchants)

(cont.)

Exhibit. *Outline of Welcoming Steps and Activities* (cont.)

4a. Student Becomes Involved in School Activities

Over first 3 weeks staff monitors student's involvement and acceptance if necessary, designated students are asked to make additional efforts to help the student enter in and feel accepted by peers.

4b. Parent Becomes Involved in School Activities

Over the first 1-2 months, staff monitors involvement and acceptance.
If necessary, designated parents are asked to make additional efforts to help the parents enter in and feel accepted

5. Assessment at End of Transition Period

Three weeks after the student enrolls, interview:
(a) the teacher to determine if the student has made a good or poor adjustment to the school (Poor school adjusters are provided with additional support in the form of volunteer help, consultation for teacher to analyze the problem and explore options, etc.)
(b) the student to determine his or her perception of how well the transition-in has gone and to offer encouragement and resources if needed
(c) the parents to check their perception of how well the transition-in has gone for the student and for themselves and to offer encouragement and resources if needed

6. Follow-up Intervention

A. Problem analysis: This step involves going back to the person or persons who indicated dissatisfaction and asking for more specifics (e.g., what the specific problem is and what the person(s) think needs to be changed). It may also be appropriate and necessary to check with others (e.g., teacher, parent, student).

B. Intervention plan: Based on the information gathered, plans can be made about what to do and who will do it. What to do may range from connecting the student/family with others for social support to helping to identify specific activities and ways to facilitate student/family involvement. Who will do it may be project staff, a volunteer, a teacher, an outreach coordinator, etc.

C. Intervention written summary: Once such an intervention is carried out the Extended Welcoming -- Summary of Intervention form can be filled out and given to the a case manager or other designated person who monitors follow-through related to interventions.

D. Extended welcoming follow-up interview: A week after the extended intervention is completed, another (modified) follow-up interview should be carried out respectively, with the student, parent, and teacher. If a problem remains, additional intervention is in order -- if feasible.

E. From High School to Higher Education and Employment

"*The senior class is graduating ... our work is done....*" Or is it?

The outcomes for which schools and communities are held accountable look beyond graduation to the successful engagement of young adults into the community as productive citizens. For some students this includes higher education; for some students the next step is employment. Schools need to focus on this important transition from the beginning. The emphasis below is mainly on the many opportunities secondary schools have to support successful transitions to higher education and employment. As Rosenbaum (2002) stresses:

> "...As the last societal institution attended by all youths, high schools must prepare all young people for adulthood. If they fail, youths will have difficulty becoming self-sufficient adults. The labor market is often a cruel teacher, and, if youths have bad job experiences, government help comes in the form of job training programs that may stigmatize and hurt their careers worse than if they got no training. While college-educated reformers think that college is necessary to get good jobs, and they often urge that all high school seniors should have the chance to become doctors and lawyers, these are not realistic options for all seniors, and they are not the only good jobs in society....
>
> While educators worry that career-related education shuts off college options, research indicates that many vocational education students get college degrees, and "college and career" programs may prepare students to do even better. While educators worry about premature career decisions, high school is not too early for students to begin assessing what they've accomplished and their likely career options. For students several years behind grade level, discussing noncollege options does not limit their careers, it helps them become aware of realities and options, so they make informed decisions. Self-assessment may encourage students to improve their efforts and to plan multiple options...."
>
> "Beyond Empty Promises: Policies to Improve Transitions into College and Jobs"
> http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/HS/rosenbaum.doc+rosenbaum+beyond+empt/+promis

Borgen and Amundson (1995) review research indicating that young people are leaving high school unprepared for current career realities and that both the career and personal areas of their lives are in a state of change and uncertainty. They note: "...older adolescents and young adults enter transitions with the goal of becoming independently functioning adults, as they strive to meet evolving personal and career related needs. Rapid and escalating changes in labor market and post-secondary educational opportunities mean that adolescents now are confronted with the challenge of meeting their personal and career needs when neither can offer certainty or a sense of personal control." Citing one of their studies, they indicate that young people at the end of their final year of high school

> "expressed optimism about entering the career area of their choice and they expected to be successful workers in challenging jobs which offered personal satisfaction. About half the respondents indicated some concern about meeting post-secondary entrance standards. Approximately 9 and 18 months following graduation, depression, self-esteem, and anxiety were correlated with a range of perceived problems, including money, lack of support from family and friends, internal attribution of general transition problems, external attribution of career/employment difficulties, and lack of job satisfaction. At the end of the study, some of the young people were interviewed. They were asked about factors that helped or hindered the post-high-school transition. Positive factors included supportive family and friends, making money, satisfying leisure activities, personal achievements, and educational success. Negative factors included relationship problems, career confusion, financial difficulties, unemployment, lack of satisfying work, lack of post-secondary educational opportunities, and difficulty in adjusting to post-secondary educational demands...."

Excerpts from: *"Models of Adolescent Transition"* by W. Borgen and N. Amundson (1995).
http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed401502.html

Some Strategies to Facilitate a Smoother Transition From High School

1. *Developing Multiple Plans.* Many young people leave high school with a narrow plan of action and with few alternatives. They fully expect to be successful with the plan and are not prepared to face any barriers. Developing flexibility in career planning requires a sense of purpose, problem solving skills, and several plans....

2. *Self-Advocacy and Marketing.* As young people move towards further education, or into the labor market, it is critical for them to market and advocate for themselves. With scarce opportunities and confusing bureaucracies, there is a need to develop communication skills, self-confidence, organizational adaptability, and effectiveness in human relations. This requires activities such as mentoring, role-played practice, and ongoing economic, emotional, and informational support.

3. *Managing Changing Relationships.* The emotional and social changes adolescents experience can challenge young people as they try to cope with barriers in the education system and labor market. Friends provide emotional support, but this is a time when friendship patterns are changing. Parents are needed for emotional, material, and information support, but, at the same time, they need to allow young people sufficient room to develop their own sense of identity. Coping with relationship issues can be facilitated through communication, human relationship training, and problem solving, which blurs most of the traditional distinction between career and personal counseling.

4. *Meeting Basic Needs.* Young people have a strong need for community. Other central needs include having a sense of meaning in life, physical and emotional security, and basic structure in relationships and living. As young people mover beyond high school, many of these basic needs require revaluation. In addition to changing relationships, questions emerge as to how to make a living, how to plan meaningful activities, and how to effectively manage time. To facilitate these changes, young people need to establish a sense of purpose and understand how they are meeting their current and future needs...

5. *Coping with Stress.* Adolescence is a period of considerable stress. While much of the stress can by minimized through support, persistence, and active decision making and planning, there still will be times when young people find themselves in difficult situations. Coping with stress is associated with various competencies such as organizational adaptability, human relations, problem solving, and self-confidence....

6. *Coping with Loss.* We were surprised at the extent to which young people were influenced by various personal losses. These losses involved death in the family (usually grand parents) and the experience of parental separation and divorce....

7. *Bridging Programs.* Many young people lack "hands-on" experience as they attempt to enter the world of work. Many also are unfamiliar with, and fearful of, moving into post-secondary education. To address this concern, counselors need to develop work experience and co-op education programs to help young people acquire the necessary experience. Post-secondary education entry programs can also play an important role in easing transition difficulties.

8. *Information and Information Access.* The challenge in the information age is not only how to gather information, but how to turn information into personally relevant knowledge. Young people need up-to-date information on careers, education programs, and market trends. They must also develop skills to assess the relevance of information. Acquiring these skills involves both theoretical and applied knowledge. Counseling strategies within this domain include helping young people develop research, interviewing, and critical analysis skills....

In a major recent report, Kirst and Antonio (2003), stress:

> America's high school students have higher educational aspirations than ever before. Eighty-eight percent of 8th graders expect to participate in some form of postsecondary education and approximately 70 percent of high school graduates actually do go to college within two years of graduating. These educational aspirations cut across racial and ethnic lines; ... But states have created unnecessary and detrimental barriers between high school and college, barriers that are undermining these student aspirations.... and no one is held accountable for issues related to student transitions from high school to college.... Our research found that the following three actions are most promising for immediate reform:
>
> - Provide all students, their parents, and educators with accurate, high quality information about, and access to, courses that will help prepare students for college-level standards.
>
> - Focus on the institutions that serve the majority of students. Shift media, policy, and research attention to include to broad access colleges and universities attended by the vast majority of students (approximately 80 percent).
>
> - Create an awareness that getting into college is not the hardest part. Expand the focus of local, state, and federal programs from access to college to include access to success in college – access to the resources and information students need to prepare well for college and to make informed decisions....
>
> *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations*
> http://www.stanford.edu/group/bridgeproject/execsummary.html

Helping Students See Opportunities That Include Both Higher Education and Employment

Excerpts from: *Community Colleges as Facilitators of School-to-Work* by F. Laanan (1995)
http://www.ericfacility.net/extra/ericdigests/ed383360.html

Advanced technologies, heightened international competition, and volatile market economies contribute to an ever-changing work environment that is demanding increasingly broader skills and technological competencies of the American workforce. Unfortunately, a large proportion of young people entering the workforce today are not properly prepared to meet the current demands of the unpredictable work environment. The challenge of preparing young people for employment and facilitating the smooth transition from school to work spurred the enactment of the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, signed by President Clinton on May 4, 1994. The main purpose and congressional intent of the STWOA is to "establish a national framework within which all States can create statewide School-to-Work Opportunities systems" (STWOA, 1994, Sec.1). The STWOA defines a school-to-work system as a network of key players that combines three central elements.

1. Work-Based Learning - the incorporation of work experience, workplace mentoring, and industry-specific skills into a sequential program of skill mastery and job training.
2. School-Based Learning - the integration of academic and vocational curriculum.
3. Connecting Activities - the implementation of bridging activities that match students with employers, link secondary with postsecondary education, and assist students to acquire additional training.

Of all educational institutions, community colleges are in the unique position to respond directly to the STWOA mandates for work-based and school-based learning, and connecting activities....

Community colleges play an integral role as facilitators of effective school-to-work systems. Throughout their history they have incorporated the three components mentioned above and they do it in three ways.

* First, community colleges serve as the primary link between secondary and post-secondary education.
* Second, they offer creative transition programs such as tech prep, apprenticeships, cooperative education, and career education.
* Third, community colleges collaborate with employers, community, government, and labor organizations....

Transition Programs : Significant changes are also required in the relationship between the classroom and the workplace, and applied and academic learning. This includes setting and meeting the academic and technical standards set by the National Education Standards and Improvement Council and the National Skill Standards Board. Transition programs with which many people are already familiar such as tech-prep education, school-to-apprenticeship, cooperative education, business-education contracts, and career academies are spearheading these changes and are potentially the foundations on which [to build] school-to-work systems will be built ....

The function of opening career pathways by means of these various transition programs is particularly suited to community colleges. Community colleges have consistently viewed career education as a means of providing the academic education and occupational training students need to meet workplace skill demands...."

Examples of Some Specific School-to-Work Programs

The Center's TA Sampler entitled, *A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning*, provides data and info on a range of interventions that provide support for transitions. The following are summaries of school-to-work interventions included in that document.

Job Corps

This is the nation's largest and most comprehensive residential education and job training program for at-risk youth, ages 16 through 24. Since 1964, the program has provided more than 1.7 million disadvantaged young people with integrated academic, vocational, and social skills training for gaining independence and getting quality, long-term jobs or furthering their education. It is a public-private partnership, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor. Benefits are reported as accruing for the disadvantaged youth who attend the program, for communities and schools where centers are located, and for employers who hire the students. More than 75% of those who enroll become employed, obtain further training, or join the military. Students who stay in the program to completion increase their chances for getting better jobs and higher wages.

For more information, contact: Job Corps: 1-800-733-JOBS (1-800-733-5627); www.jobcorps.org

Career Education

This program reports that students with low motivation to attend school improve in school attendance and retention. Vocational students are more likely to complete the vocational program they have selected, and all else being equal, the more vocational classes students took, the less likely they were to drop out of school.

For more information, see: Miller, J.V., and Imel, S. "Some Current Issues in Adult, Career, and Vocational Education." In: *Trends and Issues in Education*, 1986, edited by E. Flaxman. Washington, DC: ERIC, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, 1987. ED 281 897. Naylor, M. (1987). Reducing the Dropout Rate through Career and Vocational Education. Overview. *ERIC Digest* ED 282094.

Cognitive Career Interventions

Studies evaluating cognitive career interventions for youth with learning disabilities report counseling group interventions produced significant increases in self-awareness and career awareness, improved skills in employment writing and interviewing, and advanced strategies in problem solving and anger management.

For more information, see: Biller, E.F. (1987). *Career Decision Making for Adolescents and Young Adults with Learning Disabilities: Theory, Research and Practice*. Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas. Hutchinson, N.L. (1995). Career Counseling of Youth with Learning Disabilities. *ERIC Digest*: ED 400470. Hutchinson, N.L., Freeman, J.G., & Fisher, C. (1993). "A Two-Year Cohort Study: Career Development for Youth with Learning Disabilities." Paper at AERA annual meeting, Atlanta, GA.

Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG)

JOG's mission is to identify students at greatest risk of dropping out of school and provide them with a support system that not only keeps them in school, but also helps them adjust to the transition from school to work after graduation. Launched in 1986-87, it reports achieving a graduation rate in excess of 91 percent. More than 80 percent of students identified as at-risk when they entered were on the job, in the military, or in post-secondary education 12 months following graduation. Eighty percent of those working were in full-time placement. Cost were less than $1,000 per student, $750 of which came from State funds; the rest was from private and federal sources.

For more information, see: Jobs for Ohio's Graduates, 65 South Front Street Room 912, Columbus, OH 43215-4183. 614-466-5718. Keeping Young People in School: Community Programs That Work. By Sharon Cantelon and Donni LeBoeuf. Published in *OJJDP Bulletin*, June 1997. http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/dropout.txt

Mat-Su Alternative School (MSAS)

Reports on close work with businesses, government, and nonprofit agencies to provide at-risk youth with the academic and vocational skills needed to make the successful transition from school to work, including the military. The program networks with 150 business owners to provide job sites. Students have 100% job placement and continue employment after graduation.

For more information, contact: Mat-Su Alternative School, Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1775 West Parks Highway, Wasilla,AK 99654. 907-373-7775

F. Special Needs Students and Transitions

While all of the supports for transition discussed in this document apply to students with special needs, each of the following moves usually require extra supports and resources for such students.

Transitioning from

a special preschool program into kindergarten

one special program to another

hospital or residential programs back to school

segregated special classes to inclusion in regular education programs

high school to work or higher education

There is a great deal of information and resources available for designing transition interventions for special needs students. The following discussion highlights some major matters and provides links to various resources.

Kindergarten

"The transition from preschool services to school-age services in general education classes is a change in many aspects of education for young children with special needs.... Changes in classroom characteristics (e.g., high child-to-staff ratio and more large group instruction) and teacher expectations (e.g., more autonomy and academic skill acquisition) between preschool and elementary school, coupled with the multitude of programs from which young children with special needs come ... result in a complex transition for young children with special needs...."

Excerpt from: ***"Teachers' Reported Transition Practices for Children Transitioning into Kindergarten and First Grade"***
K. La Paro et al (2000). *Exceptional Children, 67,* 7-20

Dianna Pinkerton discusses guidelines for planning the transition of special needs student into Kindergarten. See *"Preparing Children with Disabilities for School"* at http://www.kidsource.com As she states:

"The transition from preschool to school can be difficult for a child with disabilities. Sending and receiving teachers both play important roles in the transition process.... The sending teacher should find out what skills the child will need in order to function adequately in the new setting and implement a program for preparing the child to develop those skills. Familiarity with the receiving program is essential in order to design an appropriate transition curriculum. The sending teacher can gain a better understanding of prerequisite skills by visiting the receiving classroom. For children placed in an integrated setting, behavioral requirements for successful functioning have been assessed and are referred to as survival skills.... The sending and receiving teachers will have the continuing role of acting as liaisons between programs and with parents.... The Capstone Transition Process (Johnson, Cook & Yongue, 1990) is one model that provides clear guidelines for the transition process. The first activity initiates long-range planning by establishing a "transition timeline." This timeline serves as a guide for accomplishing transition activities and can be set up in chart form to track activities...beginning 12 months before the move to a new program. The precess includes preparation, implementation, and evaluation activities. The initial steps of the process are designed to prepare the participants for their role in the transition. Steps include notifying and preparing parents and teachers from both the sending and receiving programs. Data on the child's needs are collected or updated. A profile of communication procedures, available services, prerequisite skills, and teacher expectations is developed from existing information. The preparation phase of the process culminates with the development by the transition team of an IEP for use as the basis of educational programming in the new setting...."

New Classrooms and New Schools

Again, while it will be evident that many of the following strategies for transition supports are relevant to all students, they are particularly essential for many students with special needs.

From: ***Planning for Successful Transitions Across Grade Levels*** by Cathy Pratt
http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/irca/education/transpln.html

>Preparation for transition should begin early in the spring.

>Whether a student is moving to a new classroom or to a new building, it is helpful to identify the home room teacher, or general or special educator who will have primary responsibility for the student.

>Once the receiving teacher is identified, involve this person in the annual case conference process so that they may gain information about the student's current level of functioning and can provide input into projected goals.

>Written transition plans may facilitate the student's successful movement. A meeting should be conducted to allow key participants to exchange relevant information. Responsibilities and timelines for individuals involved in the transition should be clearly stated.

>Either during the annual case conference or at the transition planning meeting, information should be exchanged about effective instructional strategies, needed modifications and adaptations, positive behavior support strategies, and methods of communication. The receiving teacher should learn about the strategies that have worked in the past so that precious time is not lost at the beginning of the new school year.

>The receiving teacher may find it helpful to observe the student in his/her current classroom or school setting. This will provide important insight into the student's learning style and needed supports.

>Instructional assistants who will be involved in the student's daily education should be identified, educated, and informed about their role in the student's education.

>Many teachers may not have previous experience with students with [special needs]. Therefore, they will need basic information....

>Student-specific information about learning styles, communication systems, medical issues and behavior supports is also critical. Remember to include cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, the school secretary, and the school nurse in the training. Classmates of the new student also may need information. This should be provided in a respectful manner and without stigmatizing the student....

>Before entering a new school, work to alleviate any anxieties the student ... may have about the new setting. Preparation for this move can be facilitated by providing the student with a map of the school, a copy of his/her schedule for the fall, a copy of the student handbook and rules, and a list of clubs/extracurricular activities.

(cont.)

From: **Planning for Successful Transitions Across Grade Levels** (cont.)

>Develop a videotape about the new school and provide written information about specific situations so that the student can learn and rehearse for the change at his/her own pace.

>Visitations should be conducted to allow the student and his/her family to meet relevant school staff, to locate the student's locker, and to become familiar with the school culture.

>Identify key people or a mentor the student can contact if she/he is having a difficult time adjusting or understanding a certain situation. It may also be helpful to find a location where the student can go to relax and to regroup. Provide the student with a visual menu of coping strategies.

>Parents should receive information about bus schedules, parent-teacher organizations, andavailable resources (e.g., counselors, social workers, nurses).

>Prior to the new school year, it will be helpful to establish methods and a schedule for communicating between home and school. Suggestions for maintaining ongoing communication include journals, daily progress notes, mid-term grades, scheduled appointments or phone calls, informal meetings, report cards, or parent-teacher conferences.

>Once in the new school, ask for peers who are willing to help the student with the transition and acclimation to the new school. By gaining the support of a friend without a disability, the student may have greater access to social opportunities during and after school.

> The ultimate goal is to promote a successful experience for both the student and the rest of the school community. By systematically addressing the transition process, [special needs] students can be prepared to participate in their new school experience.

Inclusion

If the policy for inclusion is to work effectively, then schools must address a variety of barriers and do so in a proactive way. The following worksheet from our Center's introductory packet entitled: *Least Intervention Needed: Toward Appropriate Inclusion of Students with Special Needs* provides some added areas of emphasis for school staff to pursue in building a school's capacity to include special needs students in regular programs. The focus is on expanding attention to capacity-building of teachers, paraeducators, volunteers, etc. so that (a) classrooms are better able to provide personalized instruction and address problems in a caring manner, (b) crisis response personnel are better equipped to provide support and guidance during a crisis, will appropriately follow-up afterwards, and will design prevention efforts that account for students with disabilities, (c) transition activities fully account for such students, (d) home involvement activities fully account for students with disabilities and their families, (e) services needed by disabled students and their family are available at school, and (f) effective links are in place to community resources needed by disabled students and their family. Clearly, student support personnel have a special role to play in all this.

Worksheet: Some Added Areas to Focus on in Building a School's Capacity for Inclusion

Classroom-Focused Enabling

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities
- creating small classes within big ones
- in-class academic assistance and support/guidance for students
- social support mechanisms
- strategies for responding to group dynamics and interpersonal conflicts
- advocacy for individual students
- authentic assessment

Crisis response/prevention

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities
- integrating various policies & implementation plans
- planning for additional supports both during crises and for follow-up debriefing and care
- modifying prevention strategies to accommodate full range of students (e.g., human relations and mediation programs)

Support for Transitions

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities
- having appropriate social support and physical accommodations as the student(s) make any transition into a new program, activity, or setting, and go one difficult task to another (included here are concerns about going to and from school, recreation and enrichment opportunities)
- restoring any needed services that may be lost in moving from special education to regular classes and applying 504 accommodations
- school to work/career options

Home Involvement in Schooling

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities and its impact on families
- Modifications of homework
- additional ways home can support school's efforts with youngster
- education programs for those in the home (including siblings) so they can better support youngster's development and functioning
- mutual support and respite programs for family members

Student and Family Assistance

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities and its impact on families
- ensuring referral systems are in place and not misused
- ensuring all interventions are coordinated and that there is effective management of care for clients (including as part of systems of care initiatives)
- expanding the range of school-based and school-linked services

Community Involvement (Including volunteers)

Examples of added concerns
- understanding the nature of specific disabilities and its impact on families
- recruiting businesses that will include students with disabilities 'in mentoring and job opportunities
- outreach to agencies and other resources to encourage accommodation of those with disabilities
- recruitment of parent volunteers and others who understand and want to work with disabilities

From Secondary School to Work and Higher Education

According to Phelps and Hanley-Maxwell (1997):

> While school- and employment-related outcomes for youth with disabilities continue to be problematic when compared with those for nondisabled youth, two educational practices appear to consistently align with higher-quality outcomes for students. ...
>
> > school supervised work experiences
> >
> > functionally oriented curricula in which occupationally specific skills, employability skills, and academic skills are systematically connected for students....

They offer the following "framework of clusters and components of programs and services providing effective outcomes for students with special needs." (From: "School to Work Transitions for Youth with Disabilities: A Review of Outcomes and Practices" by L. Phelps and C. Hanley-Maxwell (1997), *Review of Educational Research, 67*(2) 197-226.)

>Program administration

- Administrative leadership and support
- Sufficient financial support
- Formative program evaluation
- Summative program evaluation
- Staff development

>Curriculum and instruction

- Individualized curriculum modifications
- Integration of vocational and academic curricula
- Appropriate instructional settings
- Cooperative learning experiences

>Comprehensive Support Services

- Career guidance and counseling
- Instructional Support Services (e.g., aides)
- Assessment of individual career interests/abilities

>Formal articulation/communication

- Family/parent involvement and support
- Early notification of vocational opportunities
- Vocation and regular educators plan together
- Formalized transition planning
- Intra- and Interagency collaboration

>Occupational experience, placement, and follow up

- Work experience opportunities
- Job placement services
- Follow up

The following is excerpted from *Transition Planning for Postsecondary Education* by Susan Vess (2000) which is available from the National Mental Health and Education Center website – http://www.naspcenter.org/teachers/IDEA_postsec.html

To help special needs students decide on post secondary education, Vess stresses:

> Although the IDEA promotes transitioning into postsecondary settings, students successfully matriculate into and persist in reaching their academic and training aspirations after secondary school to the degree to which high schools understand teaching and learning in higher education and write transition plans that accurately reflect their rigors, realities and requirements. . . . Ultimately, the skills and knowledge first developed in high school are elaborated upon in postsecondary education and are demonstrated by successful employees.

In making suggestions for transition interventions, she emphasizes that they are not exhaustive, "but are designed to provide guidance in outcome-based transition planning." Among her suggestions are:

>>Explore programs: Teachers and students with disabilities explore differences among postsecondary schools to:

> Compare factors such as average class size and faculty-student ratio, format (lecture, seminar, lab), scheduling (block, night, number of course sessions) and campus size in terms of enrollment and physical accessibility to the preferences and needs of a particular student with particular symptoms of disability.
>
> Describe the best college situation for a given student, request catalogs from schools that fit the description, and discuss the merits of the various schools to hone the student's preferences and self-understanding.
>
> Solicit information from the disability services offices of target campuses about documentation requirements, reasonable accommodations and campus services. For example, could the student succeed at a campus that did not offer tutoring?

>>Think realistically about the student's academic skills versus the competitiveness of various campuses. For example, would a student rather risk flunking out of a competitive school or graduate from a less prestigious institution?

>>Acquire basic skills and competencies: When s/he graduates from high school, a student with a disability moves from entitlement to special education and services mandated by IDEA to eligibility for reasonable accommodations for a qualified student with a disability under the ADA or Section 504. S/he is guaranteed freedom from discrimination based on disability and equal access to institutional programs and activities, if s/he discloses the disability and provides the required documentation. However, whether the student "sinks or swims" depends on his or her own skills, knowledge and personal characteristics such as motivation, persistence and time management....

Although the IDEA promotes transitioning into postsecondary settings, students successfully matriculate into and persist in reaching their academic and training aspirations after secondary school to the degree to which high schools understand teaching and learning in higher education and write transition plans that accurately reflect their rigors, realities and requirements. These suggestions for the transition planning and activities are not exhaustive, but are designed to provide guidance in outcome-based transition planning. Ultimately, the skills and knowledge first developed in high school are elaborated upon in postsecondary education and are demonstrated by successful employees.

The following references provide indepth resources on the transition of special needs students from secondary schools:

Transition Coalition at http://www.transitioncoalition.org

Online publications include:

"*Answers to Commonly Asked Questions about Transition Services and the Individualized Education Program*" (in English and in Spanish)

"*Transition and Your Adolescnet with Learning Disabilities: Moving from High School to Postsecondary Education, Training, and Employment*"

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition: Creating Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities to Achieve Successful Futures http://www.ncset.org

Online resources include guidelines for:

"Work-based Learning"

"Preparing for Postsecondary Education"

"Career Guidance & Exploration"

"Community Resource Mapping: A Strategy for Promoting Successful Transition for Youth with Disabilities"

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
http://www.ncwd-youth.info

Online resources include:

"High School/High Tech Program Manual"

Career Counseling of Youth with Learning Disabilities
http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed400470.html

Technical Assistance Center on Youth Transitions: Improving Practices, Systems, and Outcomes for Youth and Young Adults with Emotional/Behavioral Difficulties – at the Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida, Tampa can provide resources and information for transition planning and best practices.
http://cfs.fmhi.usf.edu/cfsinfo/cfsdetails.cfm?projectID=196

Also of interest:

Partnerships for Youth Transition – four year programs are funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations' Center for Mental Health Services in partnership with the U. S. Department of Education. The focus of the grants is long-term support to young people (ages 14 to 25) with serious emotional disorders. See the overview of the program in Clark County, WA.
http://www.clark.wa.gov/commserv/partner/Presentation.pdf

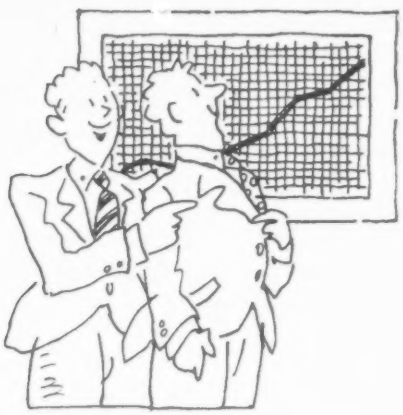
"Community Transition Teams as the Foundation for Transition Services for Youth with Learning Disabilities" G. Blalock (1996), *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 29,* 148-159. Describes teams to assist youth to prepare for attending post-secondary institutions or determining a career direction, establishing social support networks, and addressing residential living decisions.

III. Anticipating, Planning, Implementing, Evaluating, and Sustaining Interventions for Transitions

A. Role of Support Staff, Teachers, and School Leadership

B. Preparing Families to Support their Youngster's Transitions

C. Mobilizing Peers



III. Anticipating, Planning, Implementing, Evaluating, and Sustaining Interventions for Transitions

A. Role of Support Staff, Teachers, and School Leadership

Understanding the importance of transitions as opportunities for enhancing student support is only a first step. Creating programs and interventions for transitions takes a commitment on the part of school leadership and school staff. Because transitions are only one of the programs in a comprehensive component to address barriers to learning, it would be costly and short sighted to set up a new team focused only on transitions. Instead, a *resource coordinating team* with an overview of all the programs to address barriers to learning might designate a small work group to focus on transitions and their relation to other programs that support learning.

Establishing a Resource Coordinating Team

Every school that wants to improve its systems for providing student support needs a mechanism that focuses specifically on improving resource use and enhancement. A *Resource Coordinating Team* is a vital form of such a mechanism.

Most schools have a case-oriented team that focuses on individual student/family problems (e.g., a prereferral team focused on individual students). Such a team pursues functions such as referral, triage, and care monitoring or management. In contrast to this case-by-case emphasis, a school's *Resource Coordinating Team* takes responsibility for enhancing use of all resources available to the school for addressing barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development. This includes analyzing how existing resources are deployed and clarifying how they can be used to build a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach. It also integrally involves the community with a view to integrating human and financial resources from public and private sectors to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Functions of a Resource Coordinating Team

A Resource Coordinating Team performs essential functions related to the implementation and ongoing development of a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach for addressing barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development. Examples of key functions are:

- Mapping resources at school and in the community
- Analyzing resources
- Identifying the most pressing program development needs at the school
- Coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- Establishing priorities for strengthening programs and developing new ones
- Planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and systems
- Recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- Developing strategies for enhancing resources
- "Social marketing"

Related to the concept of an Enabling (Learning Support) Component, these functions are pursued within frameworks that outline six curriculum content areas and the comprehensive continuum of interventions needed to develop a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to student support that is integrated fully into the fabric of the school.

Resource Coordinating Team Members

A Resource Coordinating Team might begin with only two people. Where feasible, it should expand into an inclusive group of informed stakeholders who are able and willing. This would include the following:

>Principal or assistant principal >School Psychologist >Counselor
>School Nurse >School Social Worker >Behavioral Specialist
>Special education teacher >Title I cordinator
>Representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
>Representatives of families >Student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
>Others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

It is important to integrate the Resource Coordinating Team with the infrastructure mechanisms at the school focused on instruction and management/governance. For example, the school administrator on the team must represent the team at administrative meetings; there also should be a representative at governance meetings; and another should represent the team at a Resource Coordinating *Council* formed for the feeder pattern of schools.

References

Adelman, H.S. (1993). School-linked mental health interventions: Toward mechanisms for service coordination and integration. *Journal of Community Psychology, 21*, 309-319.

Center for Mental Health in Schools (2001). *Resource-Oriented Teams: Key Infrastructure Mechanisms for Enhancing Education Supports.* Los Angeles: Author at UCLA.

Center for Mental Health in Schools (2002). *Creating the Infrastructure for an Enabling (Learning Support) Component to Address Barriers to Student Learning.* Los Angeles: Author at UCLA.

Rosenblum, L., DiCecco, M.B., Taylor, L., & Adelman, H.S. (1995). Upgrading school support programs through collaboration: Resource Coordinating Teams. *Social Work in Education, 17*, 117-124.

For more information about Resource Coordinating Teams, see the online report:
Resource-Oriented Teams: Key Infrastructure Mechanisms for Enhancing Education Supports
at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

Functions of a Resource Coordinating Team's Work Group Focused on Transitions

The support staff, teachers, families, school leaders, and community members who form a work group to focus specifically on interventions to support transitions pursue the following functions:

1. Raise awareness on the part of staff, students, families, and community of both the risks and opportunities of transition periods (see previous sections for detailed examples).
2. Mobilize the school staff, families, and community to engage in planning programs to address transitions to increase the success of students.
3. Build the capacity of school staff, families & community to implement transition programs.
4. Monitor outcomes for students during transitions to improve support needed.
5. Integrate successful strategies into the school and community policies and practices to sustain the interventions.

One way for the work group to begin its efforts is to discuss the items on the self-study "Survey Support for Transitions" (see Section I D of this packet).

Excerpt from: *"Supporting Students in their Transition to Middle School"* A position paper jointly adopted by the National Middle School Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (http://www.nmsa.org/news/transition.html)

A Call to Action:

The National Middle School Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals urge principals, teachers, school counselors, parents, and students at both elementary and middle school levels to work together in the planning and implementing of strategies that will directly address students' concerns and ease the transition to middle school and provide children with a foundation for success in school and life. Specifically,

School leaders should:

- Make the planning, implementation, and evaluation of transition activities an annual focus, beginning in the intermediate grades of the elementary school.
- Begin as early as grade five to create an environment that promotes a confident transition from a self-contained classroom structure to the larger team structure of the middle school.
- Encourage collaboration among elementary and middle schools and teachers, students, and parents.
- Provide comprehensive orientation programs for teachers, students and families, including older siblings, who strongly influence attitudes and perceptions of transitioning students.
- Become knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of young adolescents in transition.
- Support teachers' efforts to address students' social, developmental, and academic needs.
- Provide leadership in creating a climate that values and supports effective home/school communications.

Teachers and Counselors should:

- Engage in collaborative planning with their counterparts at the elementary and middle levels to ensure a smooth academic transition that recognizes and accommodates variations in curricula across feeder schools.
- Become knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of young adolescents in transition.
- Keep parents informed, help them become skilled in dealing with issues related to transition, and welcome their participation in their children's education.
- Provide counseling at both the elementary and middle levels to address transition concerns and assure students of the availability of ongoing support.
- Provide programs, activities, and curricula to help students understand and cope successfully with the challenges of transition.
- Use a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional practices that will enable each child to experience academic success.
- Employ strategies such as cooperative learning that provide opportunities for peer interaction.
- Consider organizational structures such as team teaching that ensure teachers have meaningful knowledge and understanding of each child.

Parents should:

- Provide young children with manageable tasks that I help them develop organizational skills & responsibility.
- Encourage children to try new things and to regard failure as a necessary part of learning and growing.
- Become knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of young adolescents in transition.
- Help children turn their anxieties into positive action by learning about school rules, schedules, locker procedures and the availability of counseling.
- Attend school functions and stay involved in children's schooling.
- Support children in their efforts to become independent.
- Maintain strong family connections with young adolescents.
- Be alert to signs of depression or anxiety in their children and seek help.

In planning and implementing programs to address the needs and concerns of students moving from elementary to middle school environments, it is clear that collaboration among all adults who share responsibility and concern for our children's welfare is ultimately the most effective transition strategy we can employ.

B. Preparing Families to Support their Youngster's Transitions

Every family needs to play a proactive role in providing support for youngster's transitions.

Below is one example of the ideas related to transitions to kindergarten, to a new school, to a new class that can be shared with family members.

About Helping Your Child Adjust to a New School and Classroom

1. Prepare them for the new situation

   •• Going to a new school can be scary – tell them it's OK to feel nervous.
   •• Making friends is hard – let them take their time.
   •• Have children go to bed early so they are rested.
   •• Have children get up early so they are not rushed.
   •• Show your child the way to school and walk in together.

2. Talk and listen to your child about what they are thinking and feeling about the new situation.

   •• Share your experiences/feelings in new places.
   •• Tell them you will help them to adjust.

3. Help your children meet other children.

4. Help children find something about school they love – ask about after school activities/homework clubs, etc.

5. Find help if your child needs it. Talk to your child's teacher. School staff are all there to help your child succeed.

From: *Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families* (a TA Packet)
online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

C. Mobilizing Peers

Peers are critical supports for newcomers. Below are a smattering of ideas about how to mobilize this invaluable set of resources.

STUDENT GREETERS: Establish a Student Welcoming Club (perhaps train the student council or leadership class to take on this as a special project). These students can provide tours and some orientation (including an initial introduction to key staff at the school as feasible).

CLASSROOM GREETERS: Each teacher should have several students who are willing and able to greet strangers who come to the classroom. Recent arrivals often are interested in welcoming the next set of new enrollees.

PEER BUDDIES: In addition to the classroom greeter, the teacher should have several students who are willing and able to be a special buddy to a new student for a couple of weeks (and hopefully a regular buddy thereafter). This can provide the type of social support that allows the new student to learn about the school culture and how to become involved in various activities. How this works is that a cadre of peer buddies is trained (see guidelines for peer buddies on the next page). When a new student arrives in class, the teacher introduces the student to classmates and program and to a peer "buddy." The buddy will orient the student to the class, work with the newcomer in class, go to recess and lunch – at least for first 5 days), introduce the newcomer to other peers and activities, and so forth. The teacher or peer buddy also can give the new student a welcoming "gift" (e.g., notebook with school name, pencils), and the teacher can give the peer buddy a "thank you gift" (e.g. notebook with school name, certificate, etc). Examples of all this are provided in the Center's TA Packet entitled: *Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families* and in the Center Guide to Practive entitled: *What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families*.

If more is needed:

SUPPORT GROUPS: Offer groups designed to help new students and families learn about the community and the school and to allow them to express concerns and have them addressed. Such groups also allow them to connect with each other as another form of social support.

Guidelines for Peer Buddies

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS ON "WELCOMING COMMITTEE"

1. Introduce yourself and explain you are a special greeter to new students.
2. Give student the folder with information about the school
3. Introduce new student to other students in your class.
4. Spend recess and lunch with the new student for their first week at school
5. Enjoy your new job! We appreciate you and so will the new students!

SCRIPT FOR PEER BUDDIES:

INTRODUCTION: Introduce yourself and explain that you are a special greeter to new students. Let them know that you' ll be there for them if they have any questions about where to find things or what there is to do at this school.

SCHOOL TOUR: Give the student a tour of the school, making sure to point out important places (e.g., principal's office, bathrooms, cafeteria, classroom, and anywhere else you think they' ll need to know).

WELCOMING FOLDER: Give the new student the folder with information on the school

.

INTRODUCTION TO CLASS: Introduce the new student to other students in your class and the teacher. Let the student know that if they want to talk to the teacher about the class and school she/he would like to meet with them at the end of the day.

RECESS, LUNCH & AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES: Think about how lonely it can feel at a place where you don't know anyone. Help the new student feel less lonely by spending recess and lunch with them for their first week of school. If you can't do this please find someone in your class who can. Remember to introduce them to your friends and invite them to join any afterschool activities that you know about and/or are involved in.

RECORD YOURGREETING: Write the name of the new student you welcomed on the record sheet. Please write any problems that happened and/or any questions the student had that you could not answerer.

ENJOY YOUR NEW JOB! WE APPRECIATE YOU AND SO WILL THE NEW STUDENTS WHO YOU WELCOMED

Peer Mediation: A Role for Peers on the Playground Before Schools, at Recess, Lunch, and After School

From: "Peer Mediation" *Gale Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence*

> Peer mediation is a form of conflict resolution based on integrative negotiation and mediation. It is a process by which students act as mediators to resolve disputes among themselves. A form of conflict resolution used to address student disagreements and low-level disciplinary problems in schools.

Disputing parties converse with the goal of finding a mutually satisfying solution to their disagreement, and a neutral third party facilitates the resolution process. The salient feature of peer mediation as opposed to traditional discipline measures and other forms of conflict resolution is that, outside of the initial training and ongoing support services for students, the mediation process is entirely carried out by students and for students....

Purposes of peer mediation: In accordance with the principles of conflict resolution, peer mediation programs start with the assumption that conflict is a natural part of life that should neither be avoided nor allowed to escalate into verbal or physical violence. Equally important is the idea that children and adolescents need a venue in which they are allowed to practically apply the conflict resolution skills they are taught. Peer mediation programs vary widely in their scope and function within a school or system. In some schools, mediation is offered as an alternative to traditional disciplinary measures for low-level disruptive behavior. For example, students who swear at each other or initiate fights might agree to participate in mediation rather than being referred to the playground supervisor or principal. In other schools, mediation takes place in addition to disciplinary measures. In either case, peer mediation is intended to prevent the escalation of conflict. Serious violations of rules or violent attacks are not usually addressed through mediation.

Although peer mediation is primarily carried out by students, at least a few staff members and teachers are actively involved in training and facilitation. Ideally, peer mediation will encourage a culture of open communication and peaceful solutions to conflict....

References:

Ferrara, Judith M. *Peer Mediation: Finding a Way to Care*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishing, 1996.

Robertson, Gwendolyn. *School-Based Peer Mediation Programs: A Natural Extension of Developmental Guidance Programs*. Gorham, ME: University of Southern Maine, 1991.

Sorenson, Don L. *Conflict Resolution and Mediation for Peer Helpers* . Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation, 1992.

Townley, A., and M. Lee. *Training for Trainers: Staff Development in Conflict Resolution Skills* . Amherst, MA:
National Association for Mediation in Education, 1993.

Wolowiec, Jack, ed. *Everybody Wins: Mediation in the Schools* , Chicago: American Bar Association, 1994.

Involving Parents and Volunteers in Providing Support for Transitions

PARENT/VOLUNTEER GREETERS: Establish a Welcoming Club consisting of parents and/or volunteers. They can become greeters as new families come to enroll. They can provide regular tours and orientations (including an initial introduction to key staff at school as feasible). A Welcoming Video can be developed as useful aid.

PARENT PEER BUDDY: Parents and volunteers can be trained as peer buddies for newcomer families. Such buddies can be the core of a social support network for the newcomer, introducing the new arrival around the school and community, informing them about special activities and taking them the first time, and so forth.

PERSONAL INVITATIONS: A designated staff member or volunteer can either meet with the enrolling newcomer on the first day or make contact with the family during the next few days. The objectives are to extend another welcome, provide further information, answer questions, describe available activities, and determine interest and need for involvement. If there is interest or need, an invitation to relevant activities is extended. When newcomers attend their first activity, they are introduced and given a token welcoming "gift" (e.g.,calendar with school name; coupons donated by neighborhood merchants).

CELEBRATING NEWCOMERS: Once a month, all those involved in newcomer welcoming might hold a potluck or other special get-together at school to celebrate the coming of all who have newly come to the school that month (family members and staff).

Role of Peers Related to the Transition of Special Needs Students

From: "High School Peer Buddies" by S. Copeland, et al (2002)
Teaching Exceptional Children

Peer support programs enable general education students, rather than a classroom teacher or educational assistant, to provide support to students with disabilities. The type of support peers provide to students with disabilities varies, depending on the needs of the students. For example, general education students may help their peers with disabilities complete class-room assignments, learn appropriate ways to interact in social groups, acquire job skills, or participate in extracurricular activities.

A Few References on Peer Support for Special Needs Students' Transitions

Carter, E. W., Hughes, C., Copeland, S. R., & Breen, C. (2001). Differences between high school students who do and do not volunteer to participate in a peer interaction program. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 26*, 229-239.

Hughes, C., Copeland, S. R., Guth, C., Rung, L. L., Hwang, B., Kleeb, G., Strong, M. (2001). General education students' perspectives on their involvement in a high school peer buddy program. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 36*, 343-356.

Hughes, C. & Guth, C. (1995). Enlarging one's circle of friends: McGavock High School Peer Buddy Program. Breaking Ground: *The Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Council Newsletter, 5*, 1-3.

Hughes, C., Guth, C., Hall, S., Presley, J., Dye, M., & Byers, C. (1999). They are my best friends: Peer buddies promote inclusion in high school. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 31*, 32-37.

Hughes, C., Guth, C., & Presley, J. (in press). Peers as teachers of social interaction skills: The Metropolitan Nashville Peer Buddy Program. In W. L. Heward (Ed.), *Exceptional children: An introduction to special education* (6th ed). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill.

Miller, C. (1999). Peer Buddy Program crosses the line of disability: Nashville project helps dissolve barriers. *What's Working in Special Education Newsletter, 1*, 1-5.

IV. Resources

A. References

B. Agencies, Organizations, and Websites

C. Center Resources

1. Quick Finds
2. Consultation Cadre
3. Materials

IV. Resources

A. References

In addition to the references featured throughout this resource, below are selected others.

A Matter of Time - Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours (1992). Carnegie Corporation of New York – http://www.carnegie.org/

After School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart (2000) U.S. Dept. of Education – http://www.ed.gov/

Best Practices in School Psychology - III. "Best Practices in Transition Services" (1995). E.M. Levinson, National Association of School Psychologists; 4340 East Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814; Phone: (301) 657-0270

Beyond The Bell: A Toolkit for Creating Effective After-School Programs (2000) K. Walter, J. Caplan, C. McElvain, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) – http://www.ncrel.org/after/form.htm

Continuity for Young Children: Positive Transitions to Elementary School (1997) California Department of Education – http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/transitions/continuity.html

Creating Dedicated Local Revenue Sources for Out-of-School Time Initiatives (1999) The Finance Project – http://www.financeproject.org

Expanding Views on Transition (1996) J.B. Repetto and V.I. Correa, *Exceptional Children, 62*(6), 551-563

Focusing Our Resources: Community, Youth, and Transitions in Education (1999). Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program – http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/news.html

Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century (1995). Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development – http://www.carnegie.org/sub/pubs/reports/great_transitions/gr_intro.html

Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School (1996). R. Wiley, M. Smith, T. Peterson, & A. Ginsburg, The National Community Education Association – http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/

Mobility and School Functioning in the Early Grades (1996) P.S. Nelson, J.M. Simoni, & H.S. Adelman, *The Journal of Educational Research, 89*(6): 365-369

Report of the School-to-Work Task Force : How Psychology Can Contribute to the School - to-Work Opportunities Movement (1999). American Psychological Association. http://www.apa.org/pubinfo/school/homepage1.html

The Higher Education Transition Model: Guidelines for Facilitating College Transition Among College-Bound Students with Disabilities (1996). B. C. Gartin, P. Rumrill, & R. Serebreni, *Teaching Exceptional Children, 29*(1), 30-33

Transition: Empowerment in Transition : Guidelines For Special Educators (1995) G. Lane *LD Forum, 21*(1), Fall 1995.

B. Agencies, Organizations, Websites

Center for Summer Learning
Johns Hopkins University
http://www.summerlearning.org

National Center for Early Developing and Learning
Kindergarten Transition Studies
University of Virginia
POB 800784
Charlottesville, VA 22904-8784
Phone (804) 982-2848
http://www.ncedl.org

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota
6 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis MN 55455
612-624-2097 (phone) 612-624-9344 (fax)
http://www.ncset.org ncset@umn.edu

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
Institute for Educational Leadership
1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036
Phone 1-877-871-0744
http://www.ncwd-youth.info

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley College
http://www.noist.org

National School-to-Work Learning and Information Center
http://www.stw.ed.gov

National Technical Assistance Center on Youth Transitions
Louis de la Parte Florida MH Institute
University of South Florida
Phone 813-974 4493
http://cfs.cmhi.usf.edu/

National Transition Network
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota
430 Wulling Hall
86 Pleasant St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone (612) 626-8200
http://ici2.coled.umn.edu/ntn/

Transition Coalition
University of Kansas
Department of Special Education
Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 West Campus Rd., Room 521
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101
785-864-0686 voice
785-864-4149 fax
http://www.transitioncoalition.org

C. Center Resources

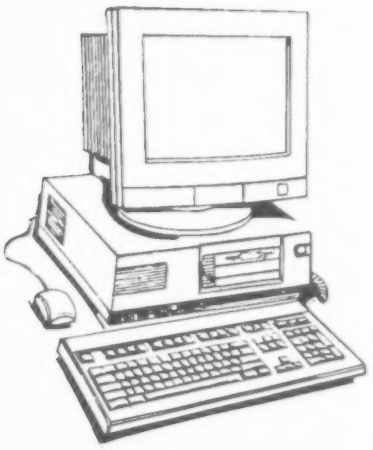
On the following pages are the contents of three Quick Finds from the Center's website – each of which has direct relevance to the material covered in this packet. Quick Finds are a fast way to access a wide range of information and resources on a given topic.

The topics included here are:

> Support for Transitions

> Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcome

> After School Programs



IV. Resources (cont.)
C. Center Resources

>>>>Quick Find: *Support For Transitions*

This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list. (Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

Center Developed Resources and Tools

A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - Readiness to Learn/Early Childhood Programs
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - Before & After-School Programs
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - Grade Articulation Programs
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - Welcoming and Social Support
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - To and From Special Education
Appendix B: Support for Transitions - School to Career Programs
Featured Newsletter article (Fall, '97), Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming & Social Support.
QuickFind on Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcome
QuickFind on the Enabling Component: Addressing Barriers to Learning by Enabling Students to Succeed
Quick Training Aid: Support for Transition to Address Barriers to Learning
H.S. Adelman & L. T aylor (1997). Toward a Scale-up Model for Replicating New Approaches to Schooling. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 8(2), 197-230.

>>>>Quick Find: *Transition Programs/grade Articulation/Welcoming*

This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list. (Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

Center Developed Resources and Tools

Training Tutorial: Support for Transitions to Address Barriers to Learning
Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What It Needs
Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming & Social Support
Featured Newsletter article (Fall, '97), Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming & Social Support.
Helping New Students Overcome Barriers
QuickFind on the Enabling Component
Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning
Support for Transitions (from our guidebook) Table 1. Outline of Welcoming Steps and Activities
Welcoming Strategies for Newly Arrived Students and Their Families
What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families
Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families
Quick Find: Support for Transitions

Relevant Publications on the Internet

Adolescent Post-Treatment Support: A High School Substance Recovery Course
Adolescence, School Transitions, and Prevention: A Research-Based Primer
Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten - Linking Children, Families, & Schools
Helping Middle School Students Make the Transition into High School
Improving Transfer and Articulation Policies
Kindergarten Transition (2002) Harvard Family Research Project
Life Advice About... Your Child's First Day At School
Managing Transitions
Moving Targets

Parents and the School-to-Work Transition of Special Needs Youth
Patterns of Urban Student Mobility and Local School Reform
Recess in Elementary School: What Does the Research Say?
School-to-Work Transition
"Student Mobility and Academic Achievement" (2002) Eric Digest
Supporting Students in the Transition to Middle School (2002) A position paper.
Transition to Kindergarten (fact sheet)
The Transition to Middle School
Youth Transition from Foster Care to Adulthood. (2001) AdvoCasey

Selected Materials from our Clearinghouse

Empowerment in Transition Planning: Guidelines for Special Educators
Supportive School Environments
Transition Support for Immigrant Students

Related Agencies and Websites

CA Healthy and Ready To Work
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools: Transitions Program
National Transition Network (NTN)

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained at Your Local Library

Achievement Loss Associated With the Transition to Middle School and High School. By Alspaugh, J.W., Sept/Oct 1998. In The Journal of Educational Research, 92 (1), 20-5.

Changes in Young Adolescents' Self-Perceptions Across the Transition from Elementary to Middle School. By Mullins, E.R., 1997.Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens.

Classroom Goal Orientation, School Belonging and Social Goals as Predictor of Students' Positive and Negative Affect Following the Transition to Middle School. By Anderman, L.H., 1999. In Journal of Research and Development in Education, 32(2), 89-103.

Declining Motivation AFter the Transition to Middle School: Schools Can Make a Difference. By Anderman, E.M., Maehr, M.L., and Midgley, C., 1999. In Journal of Research and Development in Education, 32, 131-147.

Effects of Feeder Patterns on Students' Transition to High School By Schiller, K.S., Oct 1999. In Sociology of Education, 72(4), 216-233.

Elementary to Middle School: Planning for Transition.By Perkins, P.G. & Gelfer, J.I., Jan/Feb 1995. In The Clearing House, 68(3), 47-51.

Facilitating Student Transitions into Middle School. By Stoffner, M.F. & Williamson, R.D., Mar 2000. In Middle School Journal, 31(4), 47-51.

Mean-ends Problems-solving Skills, Life Stress, and Social Support as Mediators of Adjustments in the Normative Transition to High School. By Barone, C., Aguirre-Deandreis, A.I., & Trickett, E.J., 1991. American Journal of Community Psychology, 19(2), 207-225.

Meeting the Needs of Young Adolescents: Advisory Groups, Interdisciplinary Teaching Teams, and School Transition Programs. By Mac Iver, D.J., 1990. In Phi Delta Kappan, 71(6), 458-464, EJ 402 385.

A Longitudinal Study of School Adjustment in Urban, Minority Adolescents: Effects of a High School Transition Program. By Reyes, O., Gillock, K., & Kobus, K., 1994. In American Journal of Community Psychology, 22(3), 341-369.

Role Straings and the Transition to Middle School: Longitudinal Trends and Sex Differences. By Fenzel, L.M., 1989. Journal of Early Adolescence, 9(3), 211-226.

Transition Effects of School Grade-Level Organization on Student Achievement. Alspaugh, J.W., & Harting, R.D., 1995. In The Journal of Research and Development in Education, 28(3), 145-9.

Transition Into and Out of Middle School in Irvin, J.L. (ed). What Current Research Says to Middle Level Practitioner. By Mizelle, N.B. & Mullins, E., 1997. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association, 303-313.

Transition Practices for Handicapped Young Children. What the Experts Say.By Huntinger, P.L., 1981. Journal of the Division for Early Education, 2, 8-14.

>>>>Quick Find – *After School Programs*

The following reflects our most recent response for technical assistance related to *AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (AND EVALUATION OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS)*. This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list. (Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

Center Developed Resources and Tools

A Technical Aid Packet on After-School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning
An Introductory Packet on Cultural Concerns in Addressing Barriers to Learning
A Technical Assistance Sampler on Evaluation & Accountability Related to Mental Health in Schools
A Resource Aid Packet on Where to Access Statistical Information Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning: An Annotated Reference List
A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning

Relevant Publications on the Internet

4-H Afterschool in a Box
After-School Corporation: After-School Adaptation Initiative
After school collaborations: When it works-What it works-A literature Review
After School (Harvard Family Research Project)
After-School Programs Aid Academic Success, Provide Safe Havens for Children
After-School Programs: Keeping Children Safe and Smart
After-School Programs that Promote Child and Adolescent Development: Summary of a Workshop
Afterschool Resources to Assist Community Schools
America's After-School Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime or Youth Enrichment and Achievement
Balanced and Diversified Funding: A formula for long-term sustainability for after school programs
Best Practices in Afterschool Care
Best Practices in Youth Developmetn in Public Parks and Recreation Settings
Beyond the Bell: A Toolkit for Creating Effective After-School Programs
"Beyond the Head Count: Evaluating Family Involvement in Out-of-School Time" (2002)
Bringing Education to Afterschool Programs
Challenges and Opportunities in After-School Programs: Lessons for Policymakers and Funders
The Changing Face of After School Programs: Advocating Talent Development for Urban Middle and High School Students
Communities and Schools Working Together: Making After School Count (Vol. 2, n2)
Cost Worksheet for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives
Creating Dedicated Local Revenue Sources for Out-of-School Time Initiative
Creativity, Culture, and Education in the Workforce. (2002) A. Galligan
Documenting Progress and Demonstrating Results: Evaluating Local Out-of-School Time Programs (2002)
Enhancing the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Evaluation (PDF file, 237K)
Evaluation of out of school time
Expansion of out of school programs aims at improving student achievement
Extending Learning Initiatives: Opportunities and Implementation Challenges
Extended Day Programs (Education Commission of the States)
Extended Service Schools: Putting Programming in Place
Extended-Service Schools Evaluation
Extra Learning Opportunities That Encourage Healthy Lifestyles
Fact Sheet on Afterschool Programs (2002) Feb. 6 newsletter
The Finance Project Strategy Brief: Title I Supplemental Services for After School Programs (2002)
Financing Facility Improvements for Out-of-School Time and Community School Programs
Focus: Extended-Service Schools
Growth in After-School Programs and Their Impact
Guide for Creating Afterschool Programs
Healthy Start and After School Partnerships
Healthy Start and After School Partnerships
High School After-School: What is it? What might it be? Why is it important?
After School Program Evaluation Guide
In Focus: After School Makes the Grade (Vol. 2, n3)
Keeping Schools Open As Community Learning Centers
Left Unsupervised: A Look at the Most Vulnerable Children (2003)
Making After School Count

Maximizing Federal Food and Nutrition Funds for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives
Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities
Multiple Choices After School: Findings from the Extended Service Schools Initiative (2002)
An Ongoing Look at Afterschool Programs
Out-of-School research Meets After-School Policy - The Forum for youth Investment
Out of School Time Evaluations Database
Out of School Time Evaluations Resources
The Rand Studies: evaluations of Foundations' afterschool programs' impact on participants' academic skills
Safe and Smart: Making After-School Hours Work for Kids
Chapter 2 - What Works: Components of Exemplary After-School Programs
Chapter 3 - Communities Meeting the Need for After-School Activities
Urban After-School Programs: Evaluations and Recommendations
Using Child Care and Development Fund to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives
Use of continuous improvement and evaluation in before and after school programs
Using TANF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community Initiatives
Using Title I to Support Out-of-School time and Community School Iniatives
When School is Out
Working for Children and Families: Safe and Smart After-School Programs
Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Fall 1995
Youth Development Guide: Engaging young people in After-School Programming" (2002)
21st Century Community Learning Centers: Providing Quality Afterschool Learning Opportunities

Selected Materials from our Clearinghouse

A Brief Discussion of: Evaluation, Accountability, and Mental Health in Schools
Evaluating Your Program: A Beginner's Self-Evaluation Workbook for Mentoring Programs
Evaluation of Expanded School Mental Health Programs
Communities and Schools Working Together: Making After School Count
Center for the Study of Evaluation: Program Evaluation Kit
Evaluation Handbook
Program Evaluation Kit
TA Brief: Family Collaboration in Systems Evaluation
The Evaluation Exchange: Emerging Strategies in Evaluating Child and Family Services

Related Agencies and Websites

After School Online Forum: A Place for Evaluators, Practitioners, Funders and Policymakers to Interact
After School Alliance
After School Programs (on the Internet)
ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation
National After School CD-ROM: Assessment and Evaluation
National Foundation for Educational Research
The Evaluation Exchange
The Evaluation Clearinghouse

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained at Your Local Library

"After-school child care programs." By Vandell, Deborah Lowe and Shumow, Lee (1999) In Future of Children, 9(2): p64-80.

"After-school programs for low-income children: Promise and challenges." By Halpern, Robert (1999) In Future of Children, 9(2): p81-95.

"Low-income children's after-school care: Are there beneficial effects of after-school programs?" By Posner, J.K. and Vandell, D.L. (1994). In Child Development, 65(2): p440-456.

Out-of-School time: Effects on learning in the primary grades. By Miller, B. (1995). Wellesley, MA National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Wellesley College.

School Age Care: Creative Solutions for OUt-of-School Care. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Children and Families of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources. United States Senate, One Hundred Fifth Congress, Second Session (March 5, 1998). Government Printing Office. ISBN: 0-16-057056-5.

"Tailoring established after-school programs to meet urban realities." By Chaiken, Marcia R (1998) In Elliot, D. S; Hamberg, B. A; et al. Eds. Violence in American Schools: A new perspective. Cambridge University Press: New York, NY: p348-375.

2. Consultation Cadre

The Consultation Cadre is a group of professionals across the country who have indicated a willing to network with others to share what they know at no cost. Some run programs; many work directly with kids in a variety of settings and on a wide range of psychosocial problems. Others are ready to share their expertise on policy, funding, and major system concerns. The following subgroup indicated expertise in Transitions.

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3. Center Materials

The following are some of the variety of resources produced by our Center that are relevant to supporting transitions. All are online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families
Guidelines, strategies, and resource aids for planning, implementing, and evolving programs to enhance activities for welcoming and involving new students and families in schools

What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families
Focuses on early-age interventions, primary prevention, and addressing problems soon after onset; includes discussion of schools as caring, learning environments; welcoming and social support; using volunteers to assist school adjustment; understanding and responding to learning problems and students' psychosocial and MH needs; program reporting; and more

After-School Programs and Addressing Barriers to Learning
Discusses how schools implement prevention and corrective activities through on-site after-school involvements; resources also is useful for planning programs for before-school, recess, and lunch periods, weekend, and holiday periods, and generally making schools community hubs to enrich learning opportunities and provide recreation in a safe environment.

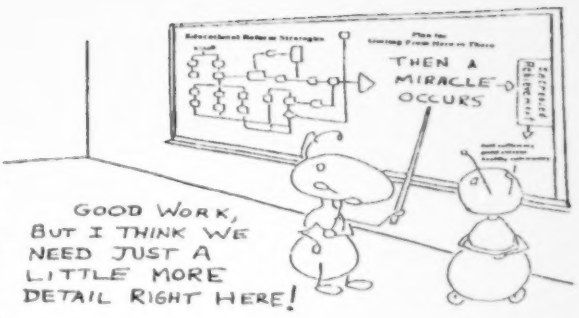
Training Tutorial: Support for Transitions to Address Barriers to Learning

Self-directed opportunities for in depth learning or a guide for training others; organized topically, with readings and related activities for "preheating," active learning, and follow-up

Least Intervention Needed:
Toward Appropriate *Inclusion* of Students with Special Needs
Highlights the principle of *least intervention needed* and its relationship to the concept of *least restrictive environment*; describes approaches for including students with disabilities in regular programs

Early Development and Learning from the Perspective of Addressing Barriers
Includes discussion of the field and recent research on early brain development. Also, summarizes the research base for early childhood interventions, underscores implications for school readiness and promoting healthy development in addressing barriers. Encompasses an extensive set of information and links to resources and references.

A Note About Sustainability



Properly conceived and implemented new initiatives are essential to improving schools and communities. Over time, too many promising innovations tend to disappear (especially those that were created with special project funding). As a result, interest in the problem of sustainability has increased markedly in recent years. The concern isn't about sustaining everything and anything. Sometimes new things don't prove to be effective or important. At other times, however, the loss represents a set back for many stakeholders.

A dictionary definition indicates that *to sustain* is "to keep in existence; to maintain; to nurture; to keep from failing; to endure." Another way to view sustainability is in terms of institutionalizing system changes. As Robert Kramer (2002) states: "Institutionalization is the active process of establishing your initiative – not merely continuing your program, but developing relationships, practices, and procedures that become a lasting part of the community." Optimally, sustainability should be a focus from the day a new activity is implemented.

Few will argue with the notion that something of value should be sustained if it is feasible to do so. Thus, the keys to sustainability are clarifying value and demonstrating feasibility and outcomes.

There is growing interest in understanding how to sustain effective innovations and some research related to evaluating sustainability (e.g., Century & Levy, 2002; Trickett, 2002; Woodbridge & Huang, 2000). Our approach to sustainability has evolved over many years, first in connection with trying to sustain demonstration programs, then as part of efforts to replicate innovations on a large-scale. Confronted with the problems and processes of scale-up, we generated a broad working framework of major considerations relevant to planning, implementing, and sustaining innovative approaches and going-to-scale. The process of large-scale replication often is called diffusion, replication, roll out, going-to-scale, or scale-up; we use the terms interchangeably here.

Our Center has delineated basic ideas, phases, stages, steps, and lessons learned related to the planning, implementation, maintenance, and scale-up of school-based innovations. A particular emphasis is given to efforts for enhancing how schools address barriers to learning and teaching. The discussion is framed around the idea that the likelihood of sustaining any new approach is increased if it is integrated into the fabric of existing school improvement efforts. And, for this to happen, it is necessary to effect systemic changes.

Those interested in sustainability as systemic change can download from our Center's website: *Sustaining School-Community Partnerships to Enhance Outcomes for Children and Youth: A Guidebook and Tool Kit* online at – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

Also, available upon request is an article entitled "On sustainability of project innovations as systemic change" by the Center's co-directors Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor which will soon be published in the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation.*

Cited References

Century, J.R., & Levy, A.J. (April, 2002). *Sustaining change: A study of nine school districts with enduring programs.* Paper presented at the AREA Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA.

Kramer, R. (2002). Strategies for the long-term institutionalized of an initiative: An overview from the Community Tool Box. Retrieved 2002 from http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu

Trickett, E.J. (2002). Context, culture, and collaboration in AIDS interventions: Ecological ideas for enhancing community impact. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 23,* 157-174.

Woodbridge, M., & Haung, L. (2000). Using evaluation data to manage, improve, market, and sustain children's services. *Systems of Care: Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health,* Volume II. Washington, DC: Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, American Institutes for Research.

We hope you found this to be a useful resource.
There's more where this came from!

This packet has been specially prepared by our Clearinghouse. Other Introductory Packets and materials are available. Resources in the Clearinghouse are organized around the following categories.

Systemic Concerns

- ! Policy issues related to mental health in schools
- ! Mechanisms and procedures for program/service coordination
  - Collaborative Teams
  - School-community service linkages
  - Cross disciplinary training and interprofessional education
- ! Comprehensive, integrated programmatic approaches (as contrasted with fragmented, categorical, specialist oriented services)
- ! Issues related to working in rural, urban, and suburban areas
- ! Restructuring school support service
  - Systemic change strategies
  - Involving stakeholders in decisions
  - Staffing patterns
  - Financing
  - Evaluation, Quality Assurance
  - Legal Issues
- ! Professional standards

Programs and Process Concerns

- ! Clustering activities into a cohesive, programmatic approach
  - Support for transitions
  - Mental health education to enhance healthy development & prevent problems
  - Parent/home involvement
  - Enhancing classrooms to reduce referrals (including prereferral interventions)
  - Use of volunteers/trainees
  - Outreach to community
  - Crisis response
  - Crisis and violence prevention (including safe schools)
- ! Staff capacity building & support
  - Cultural competence
  - Minimizing burnout
- ! Interventions for student and family assistance
- Screening/Assessment
  - Enhancing triage & ref. processes
  - Least Intervention Needed
- Short-term student counseling
  - Family counseling and support
  - Case monitoring/management
  - Confidentiality
  - Record keeping and reporting
  - School-based Clinics

Psychosocial Problems

- ! Drug/alcohol abuse
- ! Depression/suicide
- ! Grief
- ! Dropout prevention
- ! Gangs
- ! School adjustment (including newcomer acculturation)
- ! Pregnancy prevention/support
- ! Eating problems (anorexia, bulimia)
- ! Physical/Sexual Abuse
- ! Neglect
- ! Gender and sexuality
- ! Learning, attention & behavior problems
- ! Self-esteem
- ! Relationship problems
- ! Anxiety
- ! Disabilities
- ! Reactions to chronic illness

From the Center's Clearinghouse...

Thank you for your interest and support of the Center for Mental Health in Schools. You have just downloaded one of the packets from our clearinghouse. Packets not yet available on-line can be obtained by calling the Center (310)825-3634.

We want your feedback! Please rate the material you downloaded:

How well did the material meet your needs? *Not at all* *Somewhat* *Very much*

Should we keep sending out this material? *No* *Not sure* *Yes*

Please indicate which if any parts were more helpful than others.

In general, how helpful are you finding the Website? *Not at all* *Somewhat* *Very Much*

If you are receiving our monthly ENEWS, how helpful are you finding it?
Not at all *Somewhat* *Very Much*

Given the purposes for which the material was designed, are there parts that you think should be changed? (Please feel free to share any thoughts you have about improving the material or substituting better material.)

We look forward to interacting with you and contributing to your efforts over the coming years. Should you want to discuss the center further, please feel free to call (310)825-3634 or e-mail us at smhp@ucla.edu

Send your responce to:
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The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 -- Phone: (310) 825-3634.

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U.S. Department of Education
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